WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON'S WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM SOURCEBOOK

for faculty, instructional academic staff, and teaching assistants

OUR PROGRAM

The university's program in Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) is eager to help you think about effective and creative ways to incorporate writing and speaking assignments into your courses at all levels and in all disciplines. We offer one-on-one consultations, multiple WAC workshops, and instructional resources with plenty of advice and examples of successful writing and speaking assignments drawn from courses across UW-Madison.

RESOURCES

As your course unfolds, you may face challenges and want advice and materials that go beyond what's here. We'd be glad to help! If you would like to discuss ways to customize these materials and pedagogical strategies, we would be happy to consult with you—either individually or as a group of instructors for the same course.

Instructional Materials

Custom Workshops

One-on-One Consultations

WE CAN HELP YOU WITH. . .

DESIGNING writing and speaking assignments

COACHING students to succeed with writing assignments

CLARIFYING your expectations for assignments and communicating these expectations to students

EXPANDING your repertoire of writing and speaking assignments

WORKING with the Writing Center and Writing Fellows

DEVELOPING Communication-B and Writing Intensive Courses

RESPONDING TO AND EVALUATING student writing and speaking effectively and efficiently

SOLVING teaching challenges

REDUCING the risk of plagiarism

. . . AND MORE!

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We hope that you will find the materials in this sourcebook useful as you prepare to teach with writing. We are grateful to the many instructors who have generously shared their materials.

We'd especially like to acknowledge the following people whose time, materials, and wisdom have helped develop the L&S Program in Writing Across the Curriculum at UW-Madison:

Former directors of the WAC Program

1984 – 1990: Standish Henning, Professor of English
1990 – 2019: Brad Hughes, Director of the Writing Center and
Director of the Writing Across the Curriculum Program

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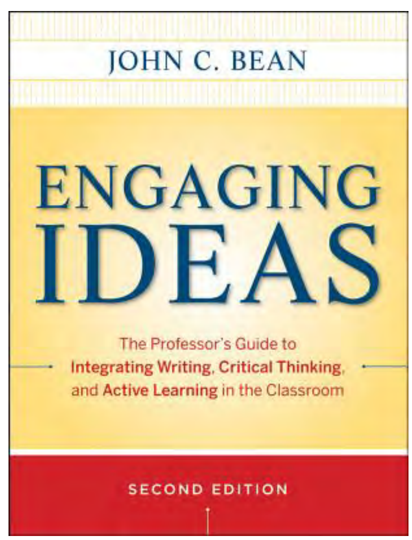
We also want to extend many, many thanks to the proofreaders who generously volunteered their time and carefully reviewed excerpts of the sourcebook.

Thanks, also, to Kathleen Daly, the sourcebook cover designer and the introductory page designer.

As you plan and teach your course, we strongly recommend you take a look at sections of an excellent book: *Engaging Ideas: A Professor's Guide to Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* by John C. Bean (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2nd edition, Sept. 2011).



Bean showcases a variety of interesting assignments, ones that engage students in solving challenging intellectual problems in different disciplines. He also suggests valuable and practical ways we can get the best work from our students, help them succeed with our writing assignments, deal with issues of grammar and correctness, and evaluate students' papers fairly and efficiently.

The UW library has a copy of Bean's *Engaging Ideas*, and copies are often available in used bookstores and online.

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Chancellor Rebecca M. Blank
University of Wisconsin-Madison

THE CHANCELLOR REFLECTS ON THE VALUE OF WRITING IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

When I travel around Wisconsin talking to alumni, community groups, and business leaders, one of the most frequent comments I hear from employers is how much they value writing skills when they hire our students—and I hear this from employers who hire engineers as well as those who hire business or social work or history majors. Personally, I think there is no skill as valuable as the ability to write accurately, quickly, and clearly. Whether through long reports, short memos, or email and social media, good writing means good communication. And good writing demonstrates clear thinking about and deep understanding of complex ideas in every discipline.

I am happy to tell people that we have a university that values strong writing in all majors. In part, this is because we do not build barriers between our schools of agriculture and engineering, or business and music, or mathematics and history. All of our students take important courses in every school and college and in every major that help build their writing skills.

At UW-Madison, we prepare students for a career, not for a job. Writing, critical thinking, technological competence, the ability to speak a second language, and the ability to work in diverse and multicultural environments— those aren't luxuries for people in leadership positions of the future. They are necessities.

As a teacher, I know how much work goes into teaching good writing. In the many years I taught economics and public policy, assigning writing projects was always part of the curriculum. As chancellor, I deeply value the work that faculty, instructional staff, and TAs do to integrate writing assignments into courses across the curriculum. And I appreciate the time it takes for instructors to meet with students to discuss drafts and to give students detailed critical feedback on their work.

The Writing Across the Curriculum Program is key to our successful writing instruction. It offers excellent resources for instructors in all departments who are looking for creative ways to incorporate writing and speaking assignments into coursework. I encourage those who teach here to take advantage of the WAC staff's expertise, whether that is through attending a workshop, scheduling a one-on-one consultation, or reviewing the hundreds of pages of advice and examples they have assembled on the WAC website, writing.wisc. edu/wac. Your students, and their future employers, will thank you. •

Reprinted from *Time to Write*, the newsletter of the L&S Program in Writing Across the Curriculum, UW-Madison, Vol. 20, No. 2. Spring 2017

Brad Hughes, Director of Writing Across the Curriculum, explains why instructors should use writing assignments in their courses to promote critical thinking and student learning.

Brad Hughes
Writing Across the Curriculum

WHY SHOULD YOU USE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN YOUR TEACHING?

Why should you use writing assignments in your teaching? That's an important question. Even though this is a Writing Across the Curriculum website, designed to encourage faculty to incorporate writing into their teaching, let's be honest—there are many reasons why you might not want to assign writing in your courses. And many of those reasons have to do with limits on your time. Designing writing assignments and responding to student writing take valuable time—lots of time if you do them carefully. The larger the enrollment is in your classes, the more time responding to student papers takes. You have lots of important course content to cover, so you have limited time for building in a sequence of writing assignments and some instruction around those assignments…

You also need to remember that writing assignments take substantial time for your students to do well. And not all of your students are well prepared to succeed with the writing you assign. This list could go on; the challenges can be formidable.

Yet countless faculty—in every discipline across the university—make writing an integral part of their teaching and reap benefits from doing so. Why? Here are some of the many reasons writing is an especially effective means for students to learn.

- Writing deepens thinking and increases students' engagement with course material.

- Well-designed writing assignments prompt students to think more deeply about what they're learning. Writing a book review, for example, forces students to read more thoroughly and critically. As an old saying goes, "How do I know what I think until I hear what I say or see what I've written?

- In fact, research done by Richard Light at Harvard confirms that "students relate writing to intensity of courses. The relationship between the amount of writing for a course and students' level of engagement—whether engagement is measured by time spent on the course, or the intellectual challenge it presents, or students' self-reported level of interest in it—is stronger than any relationship we found between student engagement and any other course characteristic" (*The Harvard Assessment Seminars*, Second Report, 1992, 25).

- Research done by the Association of American Colleges and Universities demonstrates that writing-intensive courses are a high-impact practice in undergraduate education (George D. Kuh, *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter*, 2008).

- Research done by Michele Eodice, Anne Ellen Geller, and Neal Lerner (*The Meaningful Writing Project*, 2017) demonstrates that certain writing projects can be especially meaningful parts of undergraduate education.

- Writing can improve our relationship with our students. When students write papers, we get to know them and their thinking better; they're more likely to talk with us after class, or come to our office hours to share a draft or seek advice.

- Writing gives us a window into our students' thinking and learning. Through our students' writing, we can take pleasure in discovering that students see things in course readings or discussion we didn't see; students make connections we ourselves hadn't made. And through our students' writing, we also discover what confuses our students. Admittedly, we're not always eager to discover the gaps in our students' knowledge or understanding, but it's our job to expand that knowledge and improve students' thinking.

- Writing assignments can improve our classroom discussions. By helping students keep up with readings, regular writing assignments can prepare students to participate in discussion.

- Writing assignments provide us with an opportunity to teach students to organize ideas, develop points logically, make explicit connections, elaborate ideas, argue points, and situate an argument in the context of previous research-all skills valued in higher education.

- Students remember what they write about-because writing slows thinking down and requires careful, sustained analysis of a subject. No matter how many years it's been, most of us can remember some paper we wrote as undergraduates, the writing of which deepened our knowledge of a particular subject.

- Students and professors remember what they've written, in part, because writing individualizes learning. When a student becomes really engaged with a writing assignment, she has to make countless choices particular to her paper: how to focus the topic, what to read, what to make the central argument, how to organize ideas, how to marshal evidence, which general points to make, how to develop and support general ideas with particulars, how to introduce the topic, what to include and what to omit, which style and tone to adopt.

- Finally, though it's much more than this, writing is a skill—a skill that atrophies when it isn't practiced regularly. Because learning to write well is difficult and because it requires sustained and repeated practice, we need to ensure our undergraduates write regularly, throughout the curriculum, in all majors. It's the responsibility of all of us to ensure that students learn to think and write clearly and deeply.

Professor David Zimmerman describes the writing skills he expects students to learn and develop in his courses. He provides an example of an activity that helps students build those skills and succeed with writing tasks.

Professor David Zimmerman
Department of English

DOING MORE WITH LESS: STREAMLINING YOUR WRITING CURRICULUM

I have designed many undergraduate literature courses in my eighteen years at UW-Madison on topics ranging from American Dream literature to “Imagining Apocalypse.” The same question has guided the planning of them all: what do I want my students to be able to do at the end of the course that they can’t do, or do as well, at the start? Despite the variety of course topics and formats, my answer has always been the same. Whether they’re reluctant readers and writers in large introductory lecture courses or English majors in more specialized upper-level courses, I want my students to learn how to write original, compelling, and consequential analytical arguments about the course literature and the cultural topics and concepts addressed by the literature.

At the start of my teaching career I would not have been able to articulate this answer as a goal of mine. I had only a vague notion of what writing skills I wanted my students to learn, and the weaknesses in my students’ essays showed this. It took me several years to identify these skills (for example, how to use textual data to support what I call a “staircase” argument) with any precision. However, once I could do this, I was able to design a sequence of writing activities and assignments built around these specific analytical and argumentative skills. I also reframed my lectures and discussion activities so that they self-consciously modeled and called attention to these skills. To make time for developing these skills in class, I’ve had to shelve some course content, but I’ve never regretted this.

The attention I give to writing instruction in class has directly benefitted my students by guiding and deepening their preparation for their major essays, on which much of their course grade is based. In my large lecture courses (over 200 students), the additional writing instruction has also provided a welcome foundation my TAs build on in planning their weekly sections. The attention to writing in class and in discussion sections has boosted my students’ interest in analytical writing—in making more nuanced arguments, for example—and their commitment to becoming more successful writers.

Teaching a Streamlined Set of Writing Skills

Some instructors design a course to expose students to a broad range of analytical and creative writing tasks. I have had more success with the opposite approach, through which I teach a narrow but tightly streamlined set of writing skills that students practice and develop repeatedly throughout the semester. For this reason, I use the same prompt for all major writing assignments. Indeed, this is the only formal prompt I use across all my undergraduate classes. I change only the texts that students write about, and the prompt reads as follows:

Analyze the significance of a pair or sequence of details, passages, or moments in and for one of the following works: [book x, book y, book z]. Be sure to analyze and emphasize how it serves the text’s argument (i.e., what the text is saying or showing) about a particular keyword or intersection of keywords.

The prompt may look easy, but it’s not. It requires students to combine three difficult analytical tasks, each of which students have practiced regularly in anticipatory writing assignments and class activities. First, the essay must offer an original, discerning, and persuasive analysis of a textual echo (i.e., a series of textual moments the text invites us to link), the importance of which may have escaped our notice on a first reading. The essay must also show how this echo serves to advance the text’s study of a particular “keyword” (i.e., an idea, problem, or question). And finally, the essay must show how the text, through the construction of this echo, advances our understanding of that keyword.

For me, this assignment has at least three payoffs. First, it gives students considerable freedom, ensuring that no two essays are alike. Every essay focuses on different textual moments, establishes fresh textual connections, and marshals an original thesis and argument. For this reason, I look forward to reading every essay. Second, the assignment demands that students think carefully and critically about new ideas and arguments, ensuring that students feel intellectually challenged. Finally, it focuses on the reading, critical thinking, and writing skills that are key to the course and to students’ success in the course. Early in my teaching career I made the common rookie mistake of penalizing student writers for not showcasing writing and analytical skills I had not taught. I realize now how unfair that was. I’m careful now to grade only the aspects of writing that I teach.

Crafting a Thesis: Helping Students Develop a Key Skill

Over the years I have designed handouts, mini-lectures, class activities, and assignments that anchor my writing curriculum. Because half the work of producing a successful essay in my classes involves coming up with an original, compelling, and consequential central claim, much of my writing instruction focuses on theses—what a thesis looks like, what a successful thesis is supposed to do, and how to craft one. Students identify one of my handouts, “Crafting a Thesis,” as particularly helpful. It shows how a successful thesis is typically the result of a long process of trying out different claims, selecting a few to refine and elaborate, and choosing a promising one to perfect.

My thesis handout displays each of my halting attempts to produce an original and compelling thesis about a novel I teach, Herman Melville's Benito Cereno. At first, my attempts constitute half sentences and aborted claims (for example, "Benito Cereno, is a subversive work about how blind slaveholders are to slaves' imagination"). However, each of my subsequent attempts gains in clarity and force until finally, after seventeen tries, a satisfactory thesis emerges: "Herman Melville's Benito Cereno studies how the racist beliefs and stereotypes that white slaveholders rely upon to justify slavery make them incapable of recognizing slaves' desire and capacity for revolution. The story exposes how this insensitivity not only incites, but also enables slave revolution." Discussing this handout, students see that no one—not even the professor—gives immaculate birth to a fully formed successful thesis. They see that early attempts at fashioning a thesis, inevitably stilted and unsatisfactory, are necessary first steps in producing a successful thesis. They also see that crafting a thesis is hard work.

Other writing handouts and lessons (each 10-20 minutes) focus on "Coming Up with an Essay Topic," "Introductory Paragraphs," "Keeping Your Reader's Attention on Your Argument," "Making Your Paragraphs Work," and "Constructing a 'Staircase' Argument." (I also lead an in-class grammar free-for-all that begins with a single question: "So what grammar questions do you have?" All students, I have found, have long-simmering grammar questions that they've been afraid to ask.)

Student Success in a Streamlined Writing Curriculum

Because students in my upper-level courses write several essays over the course of the semester and revise each essay two or three times, I am able to track their remarkable growth as writers. While the mean grade on these English majors' first essay typically hovers below a C (satisfactory), the mean grade on their final essay hovers close to an A (excellent). Students often celebrate this improvement and their new confidence as analytical writers in course evaluations. One student explained that the writing curriculum, together with sustained attention to writing in class, "without a doubt has made me a better writer and analytical thinker." And other students reported that it "creates excellent writers" and is "an incredibly useful resource."

Here is my summary advice for instructors who wish to give more attention to writing instruction: it's important to think carefully not just about what you want students to know at the end of the semester that they didn't know (or know as deeply) at the start, but also what you want students to be able to do at the end of the semester that they couldn't do (or do as well) at the start. You can reap enormous rewards by identifying as precisely as possible which writing skills students should be held accountable for learning, and then giving sustained attention to those skills in assignments, activities, and lectures across the whole semester.

Reprinted from *Time to Write*, the newsletter of the L&S Program in Writing Across the Curriculum, UW-Madison, Vol. 21, No. 1. Fall 2017/

In the list below, Cerbin and Beck offer insightful explanations for why students struggle when they move from high school to college writing and from one discipline to another.

Bill Cerbin, Assistant to the Provost, UW-La Crosse
Terry Beck, Department of English, UW-La Crosse

Why Learning to Write Well in College Is Difficult

The following list is not, of course, meant to rationalize sub-par writing by college students. Nor can one course instructor address all the challenges listed below. We can, though, learn from this list and push ourselves, for example, to teach explicitly the genres we assign or—when we confer with students about their papers—ask them about the previous writing advice they've received. By understanding why writing is difficult for some of our students, we can work to help students develop as more confident and able writers.

1. **Variations from discipline to discipline.** Disciplines are discourse communities with their own methods of developing and communicating knowledge. However, students take classes in several disciplines (i.e., several discourse communities) at the same time and have difficulty mastering the different forms of inquiry and the different stylistic conventions that apply. It takes a long time to develop writing proficiency in one discipline—let alone several.

2. **Lack of uniform criteria and standards.** Criteria, standards, and definitions of good writing differ from course to course (even within the same department). Students develop the idea these are arbitrary and a matter of instructors' personal preferences. This prompts them to search out "what you're looking for" or "what you want" in their assignments.

3. **Lack of explicit criteria and standards.** In some courses, students have little or no information about what constitutes appropriate writing: no clear sense of the goal students are supposed to work toward.

4. **Undeveloped writing processes.** In many classes students are expected to write well, but are not taught to do so. Courses do not try to develop students' writing: they simply require it. And students are left to use whatever strategies and competencies they have. But—unless they are given feedback and helped with their composing processes—students will not get better by simply writing a lot.

5. **Misleading or incomplete writing instruction.** In some classes, formal writing may be treated solely as a list of rules governing the use of language (grammar, spelling, punctuation) rather than as purposeful communication of ideas. When this is done, mechanical aspects of language are emphasized to the exclusion of important conceptual abilities. Often key writing concepts are never addressed in courses. For example, how to adapt one's knowledge to the audience and the situation (i.e., rhetorical thinking) is extremely important but rarely taught. Similarly, how to develop a coherent train of thought is crucial to good writing—but rarely taught.

6. **Incomplete understanding of the subject matter.** Students very often have to write about subjects that are unfamiliar to them. And, typical of novices in any subject area, their understanding as they write tends to be incomplete and naïve. Thus, it is very common that their writing lacks coherence and structure—reflecting their fragmented understanding of the topic, not necessarily their incompetence as writers.

7. **Lack of experience with and failure to understand genres.** Most assignments are academic writing exercises: "tests" in which students demonstrate their knowledge to the teacher (e.g., essays, library research papers). These are genres that are rhetorically difficult and confusing—and poor preparation for the writing they will do after their university careers. Students have fewer opportunities to develop knowledge of other forms of writing and to write to different audiences.

8. **Lack of consistent coaching.** As students go from class to class, they experience writing as a hodgepodge of activities, assignments, advice, etc. It is unlikely that these unrelated, discrete experiences promote cumulative learning and develop writing expertise.

9. **Non-reflective writing experiences.** Students probably do not treat writing as a deliberate skill to develop. For the most part, they do not analyze their own writing or reflect on their strengths, weaknesses, and development as writers.

10. **Students do not care about what they write.** Often students perceive academic writing as a chore rather than as a meaningful learning experience. While this is part of current student culture, it is not inevitable. Students are more likely to be invested in their work when they have some control over the selection of the topic and the work has an "authentic purpose" beyond getting a grade.

The following offers a framework and some resources for understanding the rich variety of dialects and languages students bring to the classroom.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR RESPECTING LANGUAGE DIVERSITY IN WRITING

UW students bring a rich variety of dialects and languages to the classroom, giving instructors who use writing in their classes a unique opportunity to build on students' linguistic resources. Unfortunately, it is easy for instructors to value the language of some groups more than others. As instructors whose goal is for *all* students to be successful, we need to take care to respect the languages students bring with them to our classes.

Respecting language diversity impacts students' success as writers and their feelings of well-being on campus. Our responses to student writing can inspire creative critical thinking or limit it. They can make a student feel like he or she belongs or seem to confirm a student's sense of alienation. They can work to affirm or dismiss a student's heritage and language. After all, writing even about the most distant topics can feel personal, closely linked to a student's own identity.

So what might guide our approach to students' diverse language resources? In 1974 members of the Conference on College Communication and Composition adopted a resolution entitled "Students' Right to Their Own Language."

We affirm the students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language -- the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard American dialect has any validity. The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. Such a claim leads to false advice for speakers and writers, and immoral advice for humans. A nation proud of its diverse heritage and its cultural and racial variety will preserve its heritage of dialects. We affirm strongly that teachers must have the experiences and training that will enable them to respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language.

For detailed recommendations see:

"Students' Right to Their Own Language" *College Composition and Communication* 25, 1974.
The article is available through the following URL: <http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/righttoownlanguage>

Other recommended resources include:

Canagarajah, A. Suresh. "The Place of World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued." *College Composition and Communication* 57.4 (2006): 586–615. Print.
This article describes the changing global role of English(es) and argues for accepting and incorporating many varieties of English in formal, academic writing.

Canagarajah, A. Suresh. *Critical Academic Writing and Multilingual Students*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002. Print.
This volume facilitates teacher self-reflection and enables readers to better understand the motivations and pedagogical implications—especially for multilingual writing—of a more openly pedagogical approach.

Horner, Bruce, Min-Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones Royster, and John Trimbur. "Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach." College English 73.3 (2011): 303–321. Print.
The authors contend that a focus on linguistic homogeneity is at odds with actual language use today. They call for a translingual approach, which they define as seeing difference in language not as a barrier to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a resource for producing meaning in writing, speaking, reading, and listening.

Smitherman, Geneva. *Talkin and Testifyin: The Language of Black America*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977. Print.
This authoritative, engaging, and affirming book on the linguistic and rhetorical history of African American English is a must read both for those who speak African American English and those who are new to it.

Young, Vershawn, and Aja Martinez. *Code-meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 2011. Print.
Editors Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja Y. Martinez, along with a range of scholars from international and national literacy studies, English education, writing studies, sociolinguistics, and critical pedagogy, argue that all writers and speakers benefit when we demystify academic language and encourage students to explore the plurality of the English language in both unofficial and official spaces.

The position statement excerpted here is based on research and the experience of thousands of teachers of writing. It provides an excellent overview of current thinking about the teaching of writing. For the full document, visit: http://www2.ncte.org/statement/teaching-writing/

National Council of Teachers of English Executive Committee, February 2016

Professional Knowledge for the Teaching of Writing

In 2004, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) developed a statement titled *Beliefs about the Teaching of Writing*. NCTE recently updated that statement to reflect some of the historically significant changes of recent years. Titled, *Professional Knowledge for the Teaching of Writing*, the new statement is informed by research and scholarly conversations in writing studies, education, linguistics, and other related fields, and includes important professional principles that guide effective teaching.

The main principles are below and fuller descriptions of each can be found at: http://www2.ncte.org/statement/teaching-writing/.

1. Writing grows out of many purposes.
2. Writing is embedded in complex social relationships and their appropriate languages.
3. Composing occurs in different modalities and technologies.
4. Conventions of finished and edited texts are an important dimension of the relationship between writers and readers.
5. Everyone has the capacity to write; writing can be taught; and teachers can help students become better writers.
6. Writing is a process.
7. Writing is a tool for thinking.
8. Writing has a complex relationship to talk.
9. Writing and reading are related.
10. Assessment of writing involves complex, informed, human judgment.
11. Assessment of writing involves complex, informed, human judgment.

In the following excerpt from the Biocore program's Writing Manual, Dr. Janet Batzli and Dr. Michelle Harris discuss the role of writing in teaching a scientific discipline such as biology.

Dr. Michelle Harris
Dr. Janet Batzli
Biocore

WHY WRITE?

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY RUSSO

The Biology Core Curriculum (Biocore) is a four semester, laboratory-intensive, writing-intensive intercollege honors program. Each fall, approximately 160 students enter the sequence through Biocore 301/302. The combinations of Biocore 301/302 and Biocore 303/304 each fulfill the University's Communication B requirement. In Biocore 301/302 and subsequent courses we provide opportunities for students to become actively involved in the process of science and for students to deal with the complexities of real problems. **Writing is a key component in our courses** because writing is an integral part of 'doing biology' which involves asking questions, proposing experiments, communicating results to other scientists, and exposing one's ideas to discussion and review by peers. We feel that this process is essential in your training as a scientist to get familiar with and gain confidence in the conventions of the discipline. In addition, we feel strongly that writing helps students think about their science, organize their thoughts, and grapple with new ideas. Learning how to write well is empowering and will help you in any profession you choose.

Writing is an integral part of the process of science. The process usually begins when someone gets curious about a topic, asks questions, and forms an idea for an experiment. If the experiment is carried out and yields reproducible results and new knowledge, a scientist writes a paper and/or does an oral presentation to communicate those results.

Through this type of communication, the scientist explains the background and biological rationale for the experiment, presents the data, and generates conclusions using data from the experiment as evidence. The scientist submits the paper to a scientific journal, and the editor sends it to a small group of peer reviewers, 2 or 3 scientists doing research in the same field. The reviewers evaluate the experiment and the conclusions with such questions as: Has the author clearly stated the question being investigated and, if possible, posed a testable hypothesis? Was the experiment logically designed and does the experiment really test what the author claims it tests? Were experimental techniques appropriate and properly performed? Do the data show what the author claims they show; did she/he include appropriate controls that rule out alternative explanations for the data? Are the conclusions logical based on the evidence presented?

The answers to these questions determine whether the peer reviewers recommend to accept or to reject the paper for publication. They may recommend acceptance after the author has made suggested revisions. If published, peers in the larger scientific community evaluate the merit of the experiment. The experimental results may spark new questions or insights among members of the community and point to new directions of study, and the process continues. That is how knowledge is generated and accepted in science.

Scientists spend a tremendous amount of time writing. In addition to journal articles, they write grant proposals, progress reports, review articles, technical reports, lectures, textbooks, memoranda, evaluations, letters of recommendation, product descriptions, press releases, and news articles.

We provide many opportunities for you to write and receive feedback in Biocore, not only because writing will be important in your future career, but also because writing is one of the best ways to learn. In *Writing to Learn* (1988), William Zinsser notes, "writing is how we think our way into a discipline, organize our thoughts about it, and generate new ideas." Writing sharpens your thinking and reasoning skills. To write clearly you must think clearly. To think clearly you must understand the topic you are trying to write about. As you try to reason your way through a paper you find out what you know - and what you don't know - about whatever you're trying to learn, and you begin to make it your own (Zinsser, 1988). If you need any further motivation, note that graduate and medical school admissions tests now include a section for assessing your writing ability.

Learning to write effectively is a process. Even experienced writers struggle to be clear and seldom achieve it on the first try. It takes practice and feedback and more practice. You will have many opportunities to have your writing reviewed by TAs and peers in all of your Biocore labs. Initially, the review process may be painful. Try not to be discouraged. It is the writing that is evaluated, not the writer. Use these evaluations as opportunities to help you improve your writing.

Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) is a national advocacy, campus action, and research initiative. Its essential learning outcomes, below, offer a framework to guide students' progress through college.

LIBERAL EDUCATION AND AMERICA'S PROMISE (LEAP): ESSENTIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining:

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

Intellectual and Practical Skills, including

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

Personal and Social Responsibility, including

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Integrative Learning, including

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

Note: This listing was developed through a multiyear dialogue with hundreds of colleges and universities about needed goals for student learning; analysis of a long series of recommendations and reports from the business community; and analysis of the accreditation requirements for engineering, business, nursing, and teacher education. The findings are documented in previous publications of the Association of American Colleges and Universities: *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (2002), *Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree* (2004), and *Liberal Education Outcomes: A Preliminary Report on Achievement in College* (2005).

COMMUNICATION-B AND WRITING-INTENSIVE CRITERIA AND COURSES

CRITERIA FOR COMMUNICATION-A COURSES

So what happens in the Comm-A course? What skills should you expect your students to have mastered upon coming to a Comm-B class? These questions are more easily asked than answered since not every student will have an "ideal" Comm-A experience. (In fact, you may even have students who come to your course without yet having a Comm-A course.) But there are some things with which the average Comm-A student should be familiar.

The overall objective of a Comm-A course is to develop students' abilities in writing and public speaking for exposition and argumentation. The courses vary in emphasis, but, across the board, the class size is about 20.

Comm-A courses stress frequent assignments in writing and speaking totaling 25-30 pages of clear, revised prose (including at least one researched essay and several prepared oral presentations) and completion of the information component developed in conjunction with the campus library user education program.

In addition to evaluations of student work by individual instructors, each course has an assessment plan to demonstrate that the course meets the Comm-A objectives.

Courses at UW-Madison That Satisfy the Comm-A Requirement

Communication Arts 100
Communication Arts 181 (honors)
Engineering Professional Development 155
English 100
English 118
Life Sciences Communication/Family and Consumer Sciences 100

The following is a more detailed breakdown of some of the specifics students should learn upon completion of a Comm-A course:

Planning:

- Selecting, narrowing, and focusing topics
- Identifying and analyzing audience information needs
- Generating and organizing ideas
- Comprehending and analyzing texts

Drafting:

- Learning structures of exposition and argument and the use of evidence
- Organizing and developing paragraphs, papers, and speeches
- Adapting writing and speaking for intended audiences
- Learning conventions of academic writing
- Mastering elements of grammar, usage, and style
- Preparing speeches for oral delivery
- Citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, and compiling accurate bibliographies

Revising:

- Developing critical skills for reading and listening—in review of peer writing/speaking
- Revising and editing essays and speeches—for spelling, punctuation, grammar, style, organization, and logic
- Critiquing assigned readings and speeches delivered outside class

Information-Seeking Skills and Strategies:

- Identifying and retrieving source materials needed to evaluate, organize, and select information from print and electronic sources
- Acquiring basic critical, technical, and mechanical skills needed to find relevant information

We hope you'll talk with your students about these requirements along with their individual Comm-A experiences.

The University's criteria, objectives, and guidelines for Communication-B courses. as updated by the Communications Implementation Committee, 1997-2000, and revised by the General Education Subcommittee, 2002-2003.

CRITERIA FOR COMMUNICATION-B COURSES

Purpose: The second Communication course will be a low-enrollment course involving substantial instruction in the four modes of literacy [that is, speaking, reading, writing, and listening], with emphasis on speaking and writing, either in the conventions of specific fields or in more advanced courses in communication.

Objectives: Specific objectives will vary with each discipline, but each course is expected to develop advanced skills in

- critical reading, logical thinking, and the use of evidence
- the use of appropriate style and disciplinary conventions in writing and speaking
- the productive use of core library resources specific to the discipline.

Requirements: Specific requirements will vary, but each course is expected to include:

- numerous assignments [six to eight would be ideal], spaced through the semester, that culminate in oral or written presentations. The balance between oral and written presentations may vary, as appropriate to the discipline, so long as the total amount of graded communication remains reasonably consistent from course to course. In a course with a 50/50 balance, students should submit at least 20 pages of writing (in multiple assignments) and give 2 or more formal oral presentations totaling at least 10 minutes. In a course with the maximum emphasis on writing (75%), students should submit at least 30 pages of writing and give two or more formal oral presentations totaling at least 5 minutes. Drafts count in the total number of pages.
- at least two opportunities for each student to be graded for oral communication as well as two or more opportunities to be graded for writing. Comm-B courses should also include informal, ungraded oral communication activities that give students further opportunities to develop and receive feedback on their speaking skills.

Requirements (continued):

- at least two assignments that require students to submit a draft or give a practice speech, assimilate feedback on it, and then revise it. Additional opportunities for feedback and revision would be better yet.
- at least one individual conference with each student, preferably early in the semester, to discuss the student's writing and/or speaking.
- an information-gathering component beyond a beginning level, normally involving two hours of instructional time in one of the campus libraries. Such activities should be planned in consultation with appropriate members of the library staff; contact the Campus Library & Information Literacy Instruction Coordinator (262-4308 or libinstruct@library.wisc.edu), for help in getting started.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of or exemption from first communication course. Courses designated as satisfying Part A of the requirement may not be used to satisfy Part B.

Class size: Recommended 20 or fewer students. Those departments or individuals requesting approval for courses with larger class size must clearly demonstrate how the objectives and requirements of the course can be satisfied within the larger format.

Instructors: Faculty or other qualified instructional staff.

Assessment: There will be normal evaluations of student work by individual instructors. In addition, each course proposal shall include an assessment plan designed to demonstrate that the course meets the objectives and requirements stated above.

Currently teaching a Writing-Intensive course? Thinking of offering one in the future? The information below will be an important resource as you consider your goals and options when teaching a Writing-Intensive course.

REQUIREMENTS FOR WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSES

Guidelines for Writing-Intensive Courses

Writing-Intensive (WI) courses in the College of Letters and Science incorporate frequent writing assignments in ways that help students learn both the subject matter of the courses and discipline-specific ways of thinking and writing. Generally, WI courses are at the intermediate or advanced level and are designed specifically for majors. Please note that writing-intensive courses are in L&S departments only, and that writing-intensive courses are different from the Bascom or Communication-B courses which will satisfy Part B of the university-wide general education communication requirements. For more information about Communication-B courses, please contact the chair of the implementation committee for those courses: Professor Nancy Westphal-Johnson, westphal@ls.admin.wisc.edu.

In most semesters, there are between 70 and 100 courses in over 30 different L&S departments designated as writing-intensive. In October 1999, the L&S Faculty Senate passed legislation recommending that all L&S departments develop enough writing-intensive courses so that all of their majors would take at least one as part of their undergraduate studies. Both the L&S curriculum committee and Faculty Senate felt strongly that the writing skills students learn in Communication-A and -B courses should be further developed, nurtured, and practiced in subsequent, more advanced writing-intensive courses.

The procedure for designating a course as writing-intensive is simple. As long as you feel that the course will meet the writing-intensive guidelines outlined below, please go ahead and list it as writing-intensive.

All you need to do is:

1. Ask the person in your department responsible for preparing the Timetable to add a footnote to your course listing. Standard Note Number 0003 is for a "Writing-Intensive Course."

2. Send Brad Hughes, the director of the L&S Program in Writing Across the Curriculum, a note or email message (English Department, Helen C. White Hall, bthughes@wisc.edu) letting him know which course you're designating as writing-intensive.

3. If you have questions about writing-intensive courses or would like advice about designing assignments and a syllabus for a WI course, please contact Brad Hughes, director of the L&S Program in Writing Across the Curriculum (3-3823, bthughes@wisc.edu). Please also explore the sample syllabi and assignments available in this sourcebook.

Minimum Requirements for WI Courses

To be designated as writing-intensive, a course must fulfill the following minimum requirements. Exceptions to some of these requirements may be made for faculty who have compelling pedagogical reasons to adjust these requirements.

1. Writing assignments must be an integral, ongoing part of the course, and the writing assignments must constitute a substantial and clearly understood component of the final course grade. Assignments must be structured and sequenced in such a way as to help students improve their writing. Instructors in writing-intensive courses should not just assign writing; they should help students succeed with and learn from that writing.

2. There must be at least four discrete writing assignments spread throughout the semester, not including in-class essay exams.

3. At least one assignment must involve revision; the draft and revision may count as two discrete writing assignments. Exceptions will be allowed for instructors who instead choose to use a sequence of repeated assignments.

4. Students must produce a total of at least 14 double-spaced pages (c. 4000 words) of finished prose; this total does not include pages in drafts. When the writing is in a foreign language, a lower number of total pages may be appropriate.

5. Instructors must provide feedback on students' writing assignments.

6. Some class time must be devoted to preparing students to complete writing assignments. Some options include:

- discussion of assignments and of evaluation criteria
- analysis and discussion of sample student papers
- discussion of writing in progress, using examples of successful work from students
- peer group activities that prepare students to write a particular paper, such as sharing and discussion of plans, outlines, strategies, theses, drafts
- discussion or presentations of students' research in progress
- instruction about how to write a particular type of paper or about solving a common writing problem

Strong Recommendations

1. Departments may wish to limit enrollment to 30 or fewer students per instructor.

2. The course syllabus should explain the writing-intensive nature of the course and should contain a schedule for writing assignments and revisions.

3. Assignments should follow a logical sequence and should match the learning goals for the course. Among the many options: assignments can move from more basic to more sophisticated kinds of thinking about course material; assignments can move from clearly defined problems toward more ill-defined problems for students to solve; assignments can move from familiar to new perspectives on course material; assignments can give students repeated practice that builds particular thinking and writing skills; complex assignments can be sequenced--students write proposals for research, write drafts, receive feedback on drafts, and then revise their papers.

4. Assignments should include time for students to prepare to write and time for them to reflect on their writing. Courses should include some informal, ungraded writing (such as journals, freewriting, reading logs, questions, proposals, response papers . . .) in order to encourage regular practice with writing, to help students reflect on and synthesize course material, and to provide opportunities for students to discover promising ideas for formal papers.

5. Students should receive detailed written instructions for each writing assignment, including an explanation of the goals and specific evaluation criteria for that assignment.

6. Instructors should require students to keep all of their writing in portfolios and to submit their past writing with new papers, so that instructors can gauge and guide students' improvement as writers.

7. Instructors should hold at least one individual conference with each student.

8. Instructors should have students complete midterm and final evaluations of the writing component of the course.

9. Instructors should consult with the staff of the L&S Program in Writing Across the Curriculum about the design of the writing component of their courses.

Models to Illustrate Number of Assignments and Number of Pages of Writing in Writing-Intensive Courses

Model #1
- one 3-page paper, with draft and revision
- one longer paper, c. 10 pages, with a proposal, draft, and revision
- one 3-page paper

Model #2
- two 2-page papers, one of which is revised
- two 6-page papers, one of which is revised

Model #3
- two 8-page papers, each with a draft and revision

Model #4
- five 1-page response papers
- one 10-page paper, with a draft; developed from one of the response papers

Model #5
- two 5-page papers, one revised
- a graded journal

Model #6
- one 5 or 6-page paper, which is revised
- one 5-page take-home midterm
- one 5 or 6-page paper

Model #7
- two 2-page papers
- one 5-page group project report
- one 3-page paper
- one 5-page paper, with draft and revision

Model #8
- one 3-page paper
- one 20-25-page paper, with proposal, draft, and revision

Below are the general findings of a study assessing the outcomes of the Communication-B requirement at UW-Madison. Completed in 1999, the study indicates that, overall, students' writing performance and perception of ability were increased after completing a Comm-B course. The entire study can be accessed online at www.provost.wisc.edu/.

Denise H. Solomon, Chair of the Verbal Assessment Committee and Associate Professor of Communication Arts
Leanne K. Knobloch, Verbal Assessment Project Assistant and Doctoral Candidate in Communication Arts

COMMUNICATION-B ASSESSMENT STUDY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Communication-B requirement is designed to cultivate student literacy in writing, speaking, and library use. In collaboration with the members of the Verbal Assessment Committee, we conducted a study to address research questions concerning (a) the achievement of Comm-B objectives in terms of students' writing performance, beliefs and self-perceptions of ability, and satisfaction with the course, and (b) the degree to which those outcomes correspond with characteristics of students, courses, instructors, and enrollment patterns.

The Comm-B study was designed to assess outcomes of the requirement, while being sensitive to the diversity of classes that are designated as Comm-B. We randomly sampled 70 sections of Comm-B classes offered during the spring of 1999, surveyed both students (n = 369) and instructors (n = 58) involved in the classes, assembled information from campus databases, and collected final papers that students submitted as part of the workload in the class (n = 384). A team of trained raters evaluated those papers with respect to 15 writing performance criteria.

Examined as a set, the results of this study suggest that the Comm-B course is generally effective with respect to writing performance, self-perceptions of ability, and student satisfaction. Notably, though, students are comparably less satisfied with the oral communication component of the course than the writing and information literacy components of the course. In addition, results identified seven factors that coincided with beneficial Comm-B outcomes: (a) completion of a Comm-A course, (b) more student effort, (c) use of a variety of instructional methods, (d) greater instructor expertise, (e) smaller class size, (f) more hours spent in low-enrollment sections, and (g) more course credit. Our suggestions link the results of this study to program level changes, as well as to revisions to the writing, speaking, and information literacy components of the course.

Findings and Recommendations: Course in General

- Better writing performance and more positive self-perceptions of ability coincided with faculty-taught Comm-B sections. Thus, we recommend exploring incentive systems for encouraging more faculty to teach Comm-B classes.
- Better writing performance and more positive self-perceptions of ability corresponded with instructors who have taught the course for multiple semesters. Thus, we recommend investigating ways to encourage and capitalize on instructor experience.
- Smaller class sizes coincided with better writing performance, increased confidence in academic skills, and greater course satisfaction. Thus, we recommend evaluating strategies to facilitate smaller class sizes.
- Teacher-student conferences corresponded with beneficial outcomes. Thus, we recommend evaluating strategies that would allow traditional instruction to be supplemented by increased one-on-one contact either in or outside of class.
- The use of a variety of instructional strategies (e.g., peer review, teacher-student conferences, feedback on completed papers, feedback on drafts later revised, etc.) was beneficial. Thus, we recommend disseminating information on a diversity of methods for teaching the course.

Findings and Recommendations: Writing

- Students who completed Comm-A tended to write more effectively than students who were exempted via English Placement Test scores (controlling for individual differences in academic ability). Thus, we recommend requiring all students to complete the Comm-A requirement.
- More course credit corresponded with better writing performance. Thus, we recommend examining the feasibility of increasing the credit load associated with the course.

Finding and Recommendations: Speaking

- Students were relatively unsatisfied with the speaking component of the Comm-B course. Thus, we recommend exploring the following strategies to provide more support for the oral communication requirement: (a) create an oral communication laboratory on campus to assist instructors in the teaching of speaking skills; (b) provide workshops to instructors on the teaching of oral communication; (c) develop a two-course sequence to fulfill Comm-A such that one course focuses on speaking and the other focuses on writing; (d) increase contact hours of the course; and (e) examine the feasibility of increasing the credit load associated with the course.

Findings and Recommendations: Information Literacy

- Older students and those students who have completed more semesters at the University were more confident in their library research skills. Thus, we recommend cultivating the development of this confidence earlier in students' academic careers by developing a program in "Information Literacy Across the Curriculum." The mission of this program would be to encourage and facilitate library instruction in classes beyond the general education communication requirements.
- Students who were exempted from Comm-A via English Placement test scores, and consequently missed the course's formal instruction in information literacy, found that component of the Comm-B course to be particularly valuable. Thus, we recommend targeting formal information literacy instruction in classes that enroll a high proportion of students exempted from Comm-A.

SEQUENCING ASSIGNMENTS IN YOUR COURSE

Brad Hughes and Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek offer four options for sequencing assignments to accomplish course goals and outcomes.

Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek
Brad Hughes
Writing Across the Curriculum

SEQUENCING ASSIGNMENTS OVER THE COURSE OF A SEMESTER

When sequencing or deciding on the order of your assignments for the semester, you may want to ask yourself two questions. First, what do you want your students to learn and be able to do by the end of the semester (that is, what are your goals)? Second, what do you anticipate your students will find difficult in achieving those goals? With answers to those questions in mind, you can then order your assignments to help your students build the skills and acquire the knowledge to meet your goals.

What follows are four of the most common sequences. Although each approach has its benefits and no one sequence is superior, assignment sequences are most effective when you explain your sequence and *the purpose of your sequence* to your students. Common sense tells us that students will be better able (and perhaps even more willing) to meet our expectations if they understand not only the requirements for individual papers but the purposes of those assignments as well. One way to share with students the “big picture” of your assignment sequence is to talk with them when you distribute a new paper assignment about how the new paper relates to the last paper. For example, you might recap the skills or concepts or knowledge that students focused on in their last paper and explain how those skills might be used or those ideas might be complicated in the next paper. You might also explain how working on this paper will help students meet your overall goals for them in the course. You can also make such connections explicit on the assignment sheet itself. In this way, your sequence of papers becomes not just one assignment after another, but is part of the process of learning to think and write in ways valued in your discipline.

1. The Iterative Pattern: Repeating the Same Assignment, Varying it by Topic
In this approach, students repeat the same type of assignment, varied by subject matter. For example, Professor Charles Cohen in the History Department sequences his “minor assignments” this way and asks students to write six 50-word analyses of various course readings. Similarly, a literature professor might have students compose several two-page “close readings” throughout the semester, each about a different literary text. Or a science or a social-science professor might have students write several experimental research reports. This approach to sequencing assumes that students will benefit from multiple opportunities to master a particular genre or skill, and that over time, that genre—the *kind* of writing assignment—becomes familiar, even transparent, to students. It also assumes that the genre is central to your discipline, and that therefore the genre offers one of the best ways for students to learn the content of the course.

2. The Scaffolded Sequence: Moving from Simpler to More Complex Assignments
In this approach, students begin with simpler, more fundamental genres or ways of thinking, then move to more difficult assignments. Over the course of a semester, you might, for example, build up to a six-page critical review of several sources by having students complete the following series of assignments: a one-page summary of one source; a two-page summary and critique of a single source; a four-page review of two sources (with revision); a six-page review of four sources (with revision). Or in a history or literature course, you might first ask students to write a close reading of a source, then later have them write a longer paper that includes close readings in support of a larger argument. This approach to sequencing assumes that students will be better equipped to write longer papers or undertake cognitively challenging tasks if they first have the opportunity to build their skills and their confidence.

3. Divide and Conquer: Breaking a Complex Assignment into Smaller Parts
In this approach, you choose to make a challenging, complex assignment one of the central activities of your course. You then break that complex assignment into a series of smaller assignments that all contribute to that final project. For example, Susan Munkres breaks down the research paper in an introductory sociology course into the following stages: Topic Area Statement; Library Assignment; Paper Prospectus; First Version of Paper for Peer Review; Peer Review Comments; Second Version of Paper; Peer Review Comments; Conferences; Paper Outlines; Final Version of Paper. This approach to sequencing assumes students’ writing and learning will improve if students have time to concentrate on and master various stages in the process of writing the paper. Students in Psychology 225, Experimental Psychology, follow a similar sequence as they learn to design and report original experimental research.

4. The Grand Tour
With this approach, you vary the genre with each new assignment. So in a public policy or urban planning course, for example, you might assign a book review, then a letter to the editor, and finally a policy analysis. Having a variety of assignments may make them more interesting to students and may make for more interesting reading for you. And different assignments may tap into students’ different strengths and interests. Remember, though, to ask yourself how familiar your students are with each genre and find ways to help them learn how to succeed with each.

In this advanced history course, Professor Emily Callaci assigns weekly "research tasks" to help students work towards a 20-25 page paper.

Professor Emily Callaci
History 600

SEQUENCING TASKS FOR A SUBSTANTIAL PAPER IN AN ADVANCED HISTORY COURSE

Decolonization and African Nationalism

History 600
Fridays, 1:20-3:20, 5257 Humanities

E-mail: ejcallaci@wisc.edu
Office: 5116 Mosse Humanities
Office hours: Thurs. 10-12 & by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In 1957, Ghana became the first sovereign nation in Africa to declare independence from colonial rule, and dozens of other African nations would soon follow suit. While people across the continent and the world celebrated the end of empire, not everyone agreed about what Africa's new nations would look like. In the years that followed decolonization, Africans from around the continent, and from various walks of life, grappled with the question: what did national sovereignty actually mean? For many, this was not only a political question, but a philosophical, cultural and moral conundrum as well. How would citizens of nations with boundaries that had been created by European colonizers develop a sense of shared identity and destiny? Should citizens, intellectuals and politicians communicate in European or African languages, and what were the stakes of such a decision? What would be the role of women in the new national governments? What would be the citizenship status of racial and ethnic minorities? Would political decolonization bring an end to the economic inequalities of the colonial era? Through weekly discussions of readings, and through the pursuit of in-depth individual research projects, members of this seminar will investigate how Africans in newly independent nations constructed their world and their future after the end of colonial rule.

COURSE GOALS:
The central goal of this course is to guide each student in the writing of a 25-page paper, based on original historical research. Each research project will explore some aspect of decolonization and African nationalism through primary sources. As preparation, we will work in consultation with the African Studies librarian at the UW Memorial Library in order to learn about the different kinds of primary sources held in the collection. Potential sources include African newspapers, archives, memoirs, speeches, artwork, philosophical writings, and oral history interviews. My hope is that you will identify a question or topic that you find personally compelling, and that through in-depth research you will find a unique and meaningful story to tell about it. While such a project requires that students hone a sense of intellectual autonomy and individual initiative, this course also invites you to join a wider community of people who have thought about the history and meaning of African nationalism, including both professional historians and your peers in the seminar. During the final two weeks of the semester, students will present their work to the seminar.

In order to help you to complete a successful research project, this course will offer you the chance to master several skills, including the following:
1. Defining a compelling historical research question
2. Locating, collecting and analyzing primary source evidence
3. Building a bibliography of secondary source materials
4. Engaging in scholarly conversation with both peers and professional historians
5. Presenting convincing historical arguments in oral and written form

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Students are required to purchase Frederick Cooper's book *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002). This book is available in the campus bookstore. Students are also required to purchase the course packet for the class, which is available for purchase in the L&S Copy Center in Room 1650 in Mosse Humanities.

All students in the course will complete the assigned readings on the syllabus, which are organized around key themes and questions in the study of the history of decolonization and nationalism in Africa. The required readings that all members of the seminar will complete are comparatively few in number for an upper-level seminar, yet students in this course will read quite a bit outside of the assigned texts. In addition to the readings that are required for everybody, students are expected to be reading primary and secondary materials that relate to their specific research region and topic.

REQUIREMENTS:
- **Final paper:** The final paper should be 20-25 pages.
- **Research tasks:** Each week, there will be an assignment designed to help you to make progress on your research project. Each research task will come with a handout, which can be found on the Learn@UW site.
- **Map quiz:** You will be asked to identify modern African nations on a blank map of Africa

- **Reading Responses:** On weeks for which there are assigned readings, you will be asked to write a brief response paper, no more than 3 paragraphs long. There will be seven of these due throughout the semester. Guidelines are included in the course packet.
- **Participation:** You are all expected to participate in class discussions and activities. This means that you must arrive in class prepared to discuss the readings and to engage with fellow seminar participants.
- **Final presentation:** During the final two class sessions, students will present their projects to the seminar.
- **Survey:** In weeks 1 and 14, students will receive an online survey from the history department. These surveys are intended to help the department assess how well our courses are serving our majors. They surveys are ungraded, but required. Thank you in advance for helping us with this.

GRADING SCHEME:
Final paper……….30%
Final presentation……….10%
Research tasks……….25%
Reading Responses……….15%
Participation……….15%
Map Quiz……….5%

RESOURCES AND POLICIES
I encourage you all to come to my office hours to discuss any aspect of the course or your progress in it. These hours are set aside specifically for your benefit. I really hope to see you there. We will spend time in class discussing writing, style, and citation methods. In addition, I encourage you to make use of the resources and services available at the Writing Center. More information about this can be found here:
http://www.writing.wisc.edu/

I will strictly enforce the university policies on academic honesty. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please be on the safe side and check. You can start here: http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html

If you are still unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, and whether you are committing plagiarism, please be on the safe side and come speak to me during office hours. Ignorance about definitions of plagiarism will not be an acceptable excuse. More detailed information about student codes of conduct may be found here:
http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html#points

Disability guidelines for course accommodations may be found at the UW McBurney Disability Resource Center site:
http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1, September 6: Introductions
Due: Please complete the online survey from history department. You will receive it in an email.

Week 2, September 13: From Social Movements to Independence
Read: Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940,* 38-190
Study: Map of Modern African nation-states (in course packet)
In-class:
1. Map quiz of postcolonial African nations
2. Travel to UW Memorial Library, Room 231 for introductory sessions on the African Studies collection Emilie Songolo, 2:20-3:20pm.
Due: **Reading Response #1**

Week 3, September 20: Nations as Imagined Communities
Read: 1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 1983), 1-46.2. Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 1-34
3. Independence Speeches by Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere and Patrice Lumumba.

Due: **Reading Response #2: (3 paragraphs):** In the first paragraph, summarize Benedict Anderson's argument. In the second paragraph, summarize Partha Chatterjee's response. In a final paragraph, analyze one of the speeches in light of the two readings.
Research task: Choose a nation, region or community that you will focus on for your research project.*

Gather the following materials:

- a timeline of that nation/region/people's history
- a list a relevant people, places, images and key terms that you think will be
- important as background knowledge for your research
- synopses of 5 recent books or journal articles about the time and place that you are researching. At this stage, you need not READ these books and articles: instead, your task will be to learn what they are about. You may use book reviews, abstracts and/or descriptions from publishers.

* You should choose based on your interests AND on the kinds of primary sources that you anticipate will be available to you. If you intend to use sources in English, it is advisable that you choose a former British colony.!

Week 4, September 27: Constructing National Cultures
Read:
1. Ngugi Wa Thiongo, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature,* (Oxford: James, Currey, 1986), 1-34.
2. Chinua Achebe, "English and the African Writer," *Transition* 75/76, 1997, 27-30
3. Mary Jo Arnoldi, "Youth Festivals and Museums: The Cultural Politics of Public Memory in Postcolonial Mali," *Africa Today* 52, no. 4 (2006).
4. Nate Plageman, *Highlife Saturday Night: Popular Music and Social Change in Urban Ghana,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 100-182.
In-class: second library session with African Studies librarian Emilie Songolo, Room 126, 2:20-3:20 pm.
Due: **Reading Response #3**
Research task: Identify a research topic and draft a research question.

Week 5, October 4: The Nation and its "Others"
Read:
1. Re-read: Cooper, *Africa Since 1940,* 176-180
2. Leander Schneider, "The Maasai's New Clothes: A Developmentalist Modernity and Its Exclusions," *Africa Today* 53, no. 1 (2006), 101-131.
3. Andrew Ivaska, "National Culture and its Others in a Cosmopolitan Capital," in *Cultured States: Youth, Gender and Modern Style in 1960s Dar es Salaam,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 37-85.
4. Andrew Ivaska, ""Anti-Urban Militants Meet Modern Misses: Urban Style, Gender and the Politics of National Culture in 1960s Dar Es Salaam"," in *Fashioning Africa: Power and the Politics of Dress*, ed. Jean Allman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 104-121.
5. James R. Brennan, "Blood Enemies: Exploitation and Urban Citizenship in the Nationalist Political Thought of Tanzania, 1958-75," *JAH* 47 (2006), 389-413

*Due:***Reading Response #4**
Research task: Identify a primary source that might be relevant to your topic (ie, a newspaper, online archive, memoir, etc) and write a primary source analysis of it.

Week 6, October 11: Gender, Sexuality and the Nation
Read:
1. Jean Allman, ""Let Your Fashion Be in Line with Our Ghanaian Costume:
Nation, Gender and the Politics of Cloth-Ing in Nkrumah's Ghana," in *Fashioning Africa: Power and the Politics of Dress*, ed. Jean Allman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).
2. Elizabeth Schmidt, "Emancipate your Husbands: Women and Nationalism in Guinea, 1953-58 in *Women in African Colonial Histories*, eds. J. Allman, S. Geiger and Musisi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 282-304.
3. Tanya J. Lyons, "Guerrilla girls and women in the Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle," in *Women in African Colonial Histories*, 305-326.
4. Chipo Hungwe, "Putting them in their place: 'respectable" and "unrespectable" women in Zimbabwean gender struggles," *Feminist Africa* (6), 2006, 33-47

*Due:***Reading Response #5**
Research task: Create a secondary source annotated bibliography with 7 secondary sources.

Week 7, October 18: Nationalism, the Family and Private Life
Read:
1. Re-read Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940,* 71-4.
2. Derek Peterson, "The Intellectual Lives of Mau Mau Detainees," *Journal of African History* 49 (2008).

3. Luise White, "Separating the Men from the Boys: Constructions of Gender, Sexuality, and Terrorism in Central Kenya, 1939-1959," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 23, no. 1 (1990).
4. Andreana C. Prichard, "'Let Us Swim in the Pool of Love': Love Letters and Discourses of Community Composition in Twentieth-Century Tanzania," *Journal of African History* 54, no. 1, 2013

Due: **Reading Response #6**
Research task: Create a provisional outline of your paper, including a thesis statement.

<u>Week 8, October 25: Race, Ethnicity and Nation</u>
Read:
1. Douglas Anthony, "'Resourceful and Progressive Blackmen': Modernity and Race in Biafra, 1967-70," *Journal of African History* 51 (2010).
2. Jonathon Glassman, "Sorting out the Tribes: The Creation of Racial Identities in Colonial Zanzibar's Newspaper Wars," *Journal of African History* 41, no. 3 (2000).
3. Liisa Malkki, "Context and Consciousness: Local Conditions for the Production of Historical and National Thought among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania," in *National Ideologies and the Production of National Cultures,* ed. Richard Fox, (Washington D.C.: American Anthropological Institute, 1990), 32-62.

*Due:***Reading Response #7**
Research task: Write a short essay, no more than two double-spaced pages, describing and assessing the primary sources that make up your archive. What sources do you plan to use? What do they allow you to learn about? What are the limitations of your sources, i.e., what do they *not* allow you to learn about?

<u>Week 9, November 1:</u>
Due:
Research task: Give an oral presentation of your topic in class. Presentations should be no longer than five minutes.

Week 10, November 8:
No class meeting;
Due:
Research task: Schedule an individual meeting with me to discuss your progress.

<u>Week 11, November 15:</u>
No class meeting
Due:
Research task: Complete a first draft of your final paper. Turn in one copy to me and another copy to your assigned peer reviewer.

<u>Week 12, November 22:</u>
No class meeting.
Due:
Research tasks:
1. Read your peer's first draft, prepare feedback, and email your comments to your peer by Tuesday, November 19th at 7pm.
2. Consider your peer's comments on your first draft. Write a paragraph or two describing how you will respond to you peer's suggestions.
3. Turn in both your peer's comments and your response to me.
November 28: Thanksgiving

<u>Week 13, December 6: Final presentations, Group 1</u>

<u>Week 14, December 13: Final presentations, Group 2</u>
Due:
Final Paper
Complete online department survey

This sample syllabus shows how Professor Lynn Keller assigns ungraded, low-stakes journal writing to let her students develop their ideas before they turn them into a high-stakes graded essay.

Professor Lynn Keller
English

SEQUENCED GRADED AND UNGRADED WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN A WRITING-INTENSIVE LITERATURE SYLLABUS

Modern American Literature Since 1914
e-mail: rlkeller@facstaff.wisc.edu

Course Description:
This course surveys American literature in several genres from 1914 to the present, acquainting students with some of the major movements, voices, and issues of twentieth-century literature in the U.S. We will focus a good deal on examining the interaction between literature and history, seeing how authors have responded to important historical events and how they have contributed to major social movements, especially the struggles of women and racial minorities for social justice.

This course is a writing-intensive course, which means that we will use a variety of writing activities, closely integrated with the course material, to help you master the interpretive and analytic skills relevant to the study of prose fiction, poetry, and drama. You will write regularly in a reading journal, in brief informal exercises, and in formal assignments, and we will be talking about effective writing in class. In addition, each student will benefit from working with an undergraduate Writing Fellow who will provide feedback on drafts of several assignments before you revise those papers. Class periods will be conducted largely as discussion, and all students are expected to contribute thoughtfully and regularly. For more information on assignments, expectations, and requirements, please see the section following the course calendar.

Course Requirements:
There are six major course requirements, which will be supplemented by brief ungraded writing exercises. These requirements are 1) participation in class discussion, 2) weekly journal writing in response to assigned readings, 3) one short 3-5 page research paper devoted to an historical issue relevant to an assigned literary work, 4) a 1-page statement about how that research affects your understanding of the text to which it is relevant, 5) and 6) two 5-6 page interpretive/analytic essays about works of literature assigned in the course, each due in draft as well as “final” form.

Oral participation implies coming prepared to voice your views and insights, to defend them when appropriate, and to contribute to the teamwork implied in discussion that is simultaneously critical and collaborative. This demands reading the course assignments carefully *before* class (and students enrolling should be prepared for the substantial amount of reading this course requires!); once you are in class, it demands listening carefully to what your classmates say and focusing on the issues at hand.

The weekly journal assignment provides an informal setting in which you will articulate and begin to develop your own responses to the texts. Keeping the journal serves several purposes: it will provide a means of recording key insights and reactions that you may wish to contribute to class discussion; it will help you probe your ideas about the text and may well lead to your identifying topics on which you would like to write your analytic essays; it will provide an additional incentive for you to stay caught up with the required reading and to read thoughtfully; it will keep me informed about your thoughts and views if these do not emerge clearly in class discussion.

Each week, you should produce two entries, each a substantial paragraph or two in length. (The average weekly entry would probably be between one and two pages in length. Two pages should be considered a maximum.) One of the weekly entries should be a focused response to some aspect of the text. For instance, you might want to examine the motivation of a particular character, or consider the effect of a particular narrative strategy. You might want to trace (briefly) a theme or a pattern of imagery. You might want to discuss the impact of the work’s structure or style. You might want to focus on a scene or a speech that baffles or intrigues you and discuss what makes it confusing or compelling, etc. Since the entries aren’t long, you’ll need to keep a fairly narrow focus. This will be a place for exploratory work, for trying out ideas or tentative analyses—not for finished arguments. The second weekly entry should record your personal impressions of the text. If you find this assignment so engaging you can hardly put the book down, why is that? If you feel no emotional connection to this work, what makes it hard to connect to? Do you find the fictional world created an improbable and far-fetched one? Does the author offend you with his/her views? What do you admire about this book, or what do you deplore about it?

Your journal entries may be either typed or handwritten. If handwritten, please write legibly. If using a computer, please double space and use one-inch margins. I recommend that you not use a spiral notebook, but that you keep a folder or a loose-leaf notebook. That way, when I collect your journal for a two-week period, I won’t take away the notebook in which you’ll want to be writing over the weekend.

Dividing the class alphabetically according to last names (Groups A and Z on the course calendar), I will collect half of the journals each week on Wednesday, so that each of you will turn in your journal regularly every two weeks. I will not collect journals on the two Wednesdays when the longer essays are due or on the day before Thanksgiving. However, I do expect you to keep up with your journals during those weeks so that when I next collect them, I find material related to all the weeks' readings. Since these journals are relatively informal (written in full sentences, but not edited or revised) and I want them to be a place where you feel free to explore, I will not make corrections or offer extensive comments, though I may acknowledge ideas I find particularly promising or points I find especially compelling.

The brief historical research paper provides you with a different kind of writing experience—that of synthetic reportage rather than interpretation—while encouraging you to think about how history may inform, be assimilated into, or be transformed in literary works. Each student will select an issue from a list I produce (alternatively, you may identify an issue independently and gain my approval for pursuing it) and then consult at least three sources in developing a brief, well-organized report to which a bibliography will be attached. I'll provide information in class about what kinds of sources are acceptable and about my expectations for this paper. These reports are due on Wednesday, October 1. At any subsequent time in the course (up until the last class meeting), you may turn in the follow-up one-page statement that considers how that knowledge affects your reading of the literary text. For instance, if the author has taken liberties with historical information, what does that reveal about the author's agendas? Or, how does an understanding of particular historical pressures help explain characters' actions? (There is no set due date for this assignment because the relevant works are assigned at different dates throughout the semester.)

You may well find that observations you make in your journal or ideas you present in the follow-up to your historical report lead you to the topics for your interpretive essays. Each of these two essays will draw upon skills of close reading and of more broadly conceptual analysis. That is, in each one you are to present an argument about a work (or perhaps several works, e.g. several poems) that develops out of close analysis of the text(s). These essays are to represent your own interpretive labors, not your processing of other critics' work. While you are welcome to consult sources that provide historical, political, or geographical information, I do not want you to consult secondary sources about the literary works or their authors. Of course, if you use any secondary sources, you must acknowledge them in footnotes and bibliography. (Note that honors students will, in other contexts, be asked to engage with some critical literature.) You are required to bring to class a complete draft of your essay on a specified date at least two weeks before the final due date. This draft will go to one of the Writing Fellows assigned to this course, who will respond with written suggestions and meet with you in an individual conference.

By a "draft," I do not mean something rough and unformed; rather, I mean a version in which you have worked hard to present your ideas as fully, clearly, and persuasively as you can. This is important because it puts you in the best position to benefit from peer review; it increases the likelihood that the person giving you feedback can point you toward improvements you might not have made on your own. When you turn in your "final" version at the beginning of class on the specified due date, it must be accompanied by the draft submitted previously, along with the Writing Fellow's written comments on that draft. The historical essay and the interpretive/analytic essays must be printed, not handwritten. Use standard-size font, double spaced lines, standard one-inch margins, and a dark printer. You want me to focus on the quality of your ideas, not on the quality of your printer or your xerox machine, so please be sure the copy is easily legible. Be sure to keep a hard copy of each assignment for yourself.

Grades:

10% for participation (quality and consistency). Anyone who attends consistently and participates with reasonable regularity will receive at least a B. Those who contribute more often (and do so thoughtfully, not simply so that their voices will be heard) will receive higher grades than B.

20% for, in combination, the weekly journals, the brief writing exercises, and the one-page follow-up to historical research paper. The journals are not formally graded, but since I expect you to spend time and energy on them, they will nonetheless "count" in your final grade. Journals that follow the specifications above and demonstrate consistent understanding of and engagement with the readings will receive at least a B. Particularly thoughtful journals will receive higher grades. Brief writing exercises will not be graded, but their successful completion will be noted in my grade book. Assignments not completed will have a negative effect on your grade. The thoughtfulness and insight of your one-page follow-up to the historical report will determine the grade on that assignment, which will figure into this portion of the final grade.

10% for the historical research paper.

30% for each of the two analytic essays. If you submitted a draft that was incomplete or very sloppy (i.e. obviously tossed off at the last minute before it was due), and/or if you did not attempt to respond to suggestions made for improvement, the grade on this assignment will be lowered.

Professor Jennifer Gipson's innovative project sends students to the Wisconsin Historical Society to research the history of objects, and she scaffolds their process culminating in brief write-ups and audio essays that appear on a class Google sites page.

Professor Jennifer Gipson
French and Italian

USING A SEMESTER-LONG WRITING PROJECT TO SUPPORT ESSENTIAL LEARNING GOALS

Instructor: Jennifer Gipson, Assistant Professor of French (jgipson@wisc.edu)
Class: French 248 / Folklore 230 (Ethnic Studies): French in the United States

In this project, **"A History of French in the Upper Midwest in Objects from the Wisconsin Historical Society,"** was inspired by the British Museum's exposition "History of the World in 100 Objects.". Students became "experts" on an item of their choosing from the Wisconsin Historical Society's Special Collections.

Course Description:
Why does Wisconsin have cities named "Luxembourg" or "Prairie du Chien"? Why was the short story now hailed as the first known work of "African-American" fiction actually written in French and published in Paris? What ties to France did residents of post-Katrina New Orleans cite in a satirical petition begging France's then-president: "Buy us back, Chirac"? For Native Americans, had the land sold in the Louisiana Purchase even ever been "French"?

This class will trace these and other questions of cultural and linguistic identity through the study of literary texts; political and religious writings; maps; film; folk narrative; music; and customary practices. Throughout, we will work to understand how notions of "race" and "ethnicity" in the U.S have been shaped by French influence and the French language—as seen, for example, in the renegotiation "whiteness" among Cajuns or the impact of Native American's early contacts with French-speakers. We will also be attentive to ways that cultural artifacts or traditional practices become part of broader economic, artistic, or ideological exchanges. To this end, we might consider the Cajun music in Madison, the recent success of the History Channel's reality show *Swamp People*, or even the competition for the design of Wisconsin's state quarter. All lectures and class work in English.

Note that this class meets the Ethnic Studies Requirement: Our assignments will be geared towards the four essential learning goals associated with this requirement: "awareness of history's impact on the present"; "ability to recognize and question assumptions"; "a consciousness of self and other"; and "effective participation in a multicultural society." To meet these goals, we will study a variety of cultural artifacts, the links between which may not be immediately apparent. Thus, we will work to draw parallels between different parts of this class and to relate themes of this class in relation to larger questions. In short, success in this class requires that you *think* about course topics (e.g, race, ethnicity, or Americanization) outside of class.

Primary Learning Goals of Project
--Synthesize knowledge by relating item from the Wisconsin Historical Society to class themes
--Discover how objects (texts, maps, photographs, etc.) tell stories
--Challenge assumptions about history by discovering first-hand a multiplicity of histories and thinking about how people shape certain histories (c.f. Ethnic Studies Essential Learning Outcomes)
--Learn about campus resources, special collections, and why primary documents matter--
--Develop sensitivity to registers of oral and written discourse in preparing an audio essay

First Day of Class
-Reflection: If you had to pick five objects to tell the story of your life...
-Discussion: What would a history of Wisconsin in five object look like?
-Goals: Think about how objects tell stories and how histories (or archives) are defined by choices that people make..

Last Day of Class
-Students presented a UW google sites page with an image of their item, a short abstract, an audio essay with transcript, and a one sentence question they sought to answer (example used with permission):
--"Did the French presence in the United States determine the success of the Lewis and Clark expedition?" (object: the diary of Charles Floyd, a member of the Corps of Discovery)
--"What do 18th century portraits of *métis* people tell us about their lives?" (object: Portrait of Chief Tshu-gue-ga, see example on next page)

Portrait of Chief Tshu-gue-ga

Portrait by artist and traveler James Otto Lewis showing a half Native American (Winnebago), half French tribal chief commemorating the 1827 treaty of Green Bay.

This is a lithograph portrait of Chief Tshu-gue-ga, created by the artist James Otto Lewis who was born in Philadelphia at the turn of the 17th century. From 1825-1828, he was commissioned by the United States Indian Department to attend and record treaty ceremonies and government-sponsored Native American councils. At each site he visited, in various places such as Fond du Lac, Fort Wayne and Prairie de Chien, he created drawings of Native Americans and the treaty ceremonies that would be turned into hand painted lithographs.

What do 18th century portraits of *métis* people tell us about their lives?

Métis refers to the children of Native American mothers and French fathers who became intermediaries between future traders, travelers and French speaking people and their tribes. These sort of 'half-breeds' were not uncommon in the upper midwest including Wisconsin, becoming especially helpful during a time when the newly formed government wanted to regulate and control the Native American populations.

Through his travels on treaty-making expeditions, Lewis created drawings of Native Americans, landscapes, tribal rituals and scenes of the treaties being made. These were all later published into lithographs by an independent company and complied into the Aboriginal Portfolio: A Collection of Portraits of the Most Celebrated Chiefs of the North American Indians. This portrait of Chief Tshu-gue-ga was included in that portfolio, with the caption of "A Celebrated Chief half Winnebago and half French."

To read the text of the audio essay in PDF format, click below.

Image courtesy of the Wisconsin Historical Society. Lewis, James Otto. *The Aboriginal Port-folio: a Collection of Portraits of the Most Celebrated Chiefs of the North American Indians.* Philadelphia: J.O. Lewis, 1835. Online facsimile at http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/search.asp?id=119.

Intermediate Stages of the Project

- **Field trip to Wisconsin Historical Society** and presentations by librarians (third week of class)
- **Students view objects classmates have chosen and sign-up for their own object via UW Google forms,** writing a short personal statement about their choice (other fields for call number, permalink from catalogue, tags)
- **Professor gives approval and initial guidance** via comments on UW Google forms spreadsheet and encourages **students remain attentive to how new class concepts relate** to "their" object.
- **Writing assignment (draft for Writing Fellow + final version for professor):** Short description + Close reading of item (distinguishing description and research from analysis).

- **Conference with professor** (students bring a carefully written one-sentence question that they seek to answer with their object. This challenges students to distill the importance of the object into one sentence, building on skills hones in our regular 50-word sentence assignments. The question also provided a convenient way for me to check to make sure students were on track before they completed an audio essay script draft for their Writing Fellow.

- **Writing assignment (draft for Writing Fellow + final version for professor):** Script for longer audio essay with background + development of description and analysis from the first assignment.

- **Software Training for Students sessions:** 1) basics of Google sites and recording with Audacity and 2) help session to assemble (hopefully) prepared materials into a webpage.

Selected Evaluation Criteria
- Conformity to instructions
- Quality of analysis (analysis description)
- Ability to relate object to overall class concepts
- Effective communication (differences between written and spoken discourse)

Resources for assignment design
- UW Libraries and the Wisconsin Historical Society
- UW Design Lab: http://designlab.wisc.edu/
- Software Training for Students: http://sts.doit.wisc.edu/
- UW Writing Center: http://www.writing.wisc.edu/
- The British Museum, "A History of the World in 100 Objects": http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/a_history_of_the_world.aspx
- Smithsonian's "101 Objects that Made America": http://www.smithsonianmag.com/specialreports/101-objects-that-made-america/
- Art Babble: Object Lesson: http://www.artbabble.org/video/chipstone/object-lesson-cabinet

Professor Caitilyn Allen's writing-intensive Women's Studies 530 syllabus includes her expectations for polished and revised drafts as well as overviews of the various papers she assigns throughout the semester.

Professor Caitilyn Allen
Plant Pathology
Women's Studies 530

SEQUENCING DIFFERENT GENRES OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN A WOMEN'S STUDIES SYLLABUS

Women's Studies 530: Biology and Gender

WS530 is a writing-intensive course. During the semester you will submit two brief summary papers and two longer papers. In addition, there will be several in-class writing exercises. These written assignments will help you understand and analyze the course material and simultaneously improve your writing skills. You are expected to write thoughtfully and revise your work to make it concise and clear.

The Women's Studies S530 Writing Fellows
We are fortunate to have peer writing tutors, called Writing Fellows, assigned to our course this semester. They will work with you individually outside the classroom to help you improve the clarity and effectiveness of your writing. I have chosen to work with Writing Fellows in this course because I believe in the philosophy behind this program: "All writers, no matter how accomplished, can improve their writing by sharing works in progress and making revisions based on constructive criticism."

Writing Fellows <u>are:</u>
- undergraduate students who will read your writing and make constructive suggestions for revision
- trained in how to critically evaluate writing and respond helpfully
- supervised closely by your professor

Writing Fellows <u>do not:</u>
- grade your papers
- teach you course-specific content

How it works:
The Writing Fellows will work with you on two different assignments, the evolutionary psychology paper and the popular media paper. In each case, you will submit a polished draft* of your paper to me on the assigned due date. I will pass it on to your Writing Fellow, who will carefully read your paper, make comments on your draft, and then meet with you individually for a conference to discuss your writing and suggestions for revision. You will then revise your paper and submit both the original draft and your revised version on the specified revision due date. Please include a cover letter briefly explaining how you responded to each of your Writing Fellow's comments.

*What's a Polished Draft?
A polished draft represents your best effort at the assignment. It is typewritten (double-spaced) and has a complete bibliography. It is of quality comparable to what you would turn in for grading. It is not an outline, a rough draft, or a first draft. **Proofread** carefully to remove any grammar or spelling errors (see handouts on common usage errors and editing your own prose). This will ensure that when you meet, your Writing Fellow can focus on larger issues like organization, presentation, and clarity of style.

<u>Due date policy:</u> I will deduct 10% per day up to two days if papers are late. I will not accept papers more than two days after the due date. Please see me if you start to fall behind or need assistance.

<u>References:</u> You must cite references for facts and ideas that are not your own. Anything less is plagiarism. If you refer to material from the course reader, you may cite it simply by author and year in parentheses, e.g.: (LeVay, 1991). You may also cite class lectures as (WS530 Lecture). Give a more complete citation in a footnote if you cite an outside source. Sample format:

Fisher, Helen. 1992. Anatomy of Love: The Natural History of Monogamy, Adultery, and Divorce. W. W. Norton and Co., New York. 431 p. (book)

Profet, Margie. 1993. Menstruation as a defense against pathogens transported by sperm. *Quarterly Review of Biology* 68:335-386. (journal article)

Academic Honesty: You should be familiar with the University's standards for academic honesty as described in the pamphlet, *Academic Misconduct: Rules and Procedures*, published by the Dean of Students' Office. You are expected to work *alone* on the individual writing assignments and exams. Books, articles, and class notes may be consulted but you must cite any such sources in your papers and exams. The only exceptions to this policy are the explicitly-labeled group assignments.

THE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Two one-page summary papers. An important goal of this course is to teach you to read scientific literature critically. To help you take an active rather than a passive approach to these readings, you will write brief summaries of two research papers. You must choose one paper from Group 1 and one paper from Group 2 (see list below). Together, these short papers are worth 15% of your grade. They are due in class on the day the reading is assigned.

Group 1: Choose either: Due Date
"From vigilance to violence" Friday Sept 29
or:
"Does facial attractiveness honestly advertise health?" Wednesday Oct 4

Group 2: Critique either:
"Menstrual cycle symptomatology..." Friday Oct 13
or:
"Estrogen-related variations in human spatial..." Monday Oct 16

Each paper should contain a concise summary of the research or concept described in the reading, followed by your critique. Typed papers should be **one page, double-spaced**. Handwritten papers should be two pages; if you must hand-write your papers, please skip lines and write legibly.

The **summary** should answer the following questions:

1. What hypothesis was the author(s) trying to test?
2. What methods were used to test the hypothesis?
3. What results were obtained?
4. How did the author(s) interpret these results?

• You should be able to write a general summary in four or five sentences. Don't get bogged down in unnecessary details. Avoid copying the abstract.

The **critique should be about half your paper**. It may consider one or two of the following questions (or others as appropriate):

1. Did the experimental approach adequately test the hypothesis?
2. Did the results obtained justify the interpretation and conclusions?
3. Were appropriate controls used?
4. Could bias have affected the results obtained? How?
5. Were all relevant results or sources considered?

• Effective critiques often use specific examples to support an argument. Cite your sources!

2. A five-page paper on evolutionary psychology. (WF) Choose one of the two topics below. The listed research papers present conflicting scientific evidence on a question. In a carefully documented essay, critically compare and contrast the papers. Focusing on the experimental methods, assumptions, and data, explain which, if any, is correct? Cite specific evidence from sources listed below, and from assigned readings. **Focus on the biology** behind the arguments. This essay should be understandable to an educated non-scientist and is worth 20% of your grade. (Note: most references are in the back of the Course Reader.)

Topic A: What is the "good" female body? Evolutionary psychologists believe that men are genetically programmed to be attracted to women who have specific traits that certify their reproductive potential. A woman's mate value can be detected from visual cues that form a universal standard of female beauty. Problem: What are these cues?

Singh, Devendra. 1993. Adaptive significance of female physical attractiveness: role of waist-to-hip ratio. J. *Personality and Social Psychology* 2:293–307.

Tovee, M, S. Reinhardt, J. Emery, and P. Cornelissen. 1998. Optimum body-mass index and maximum sexual attractiveness. *The Lancet* 352:548.

Yu, D.W., and G. H. Shepherd. 1998. Is beauty in the eye of the beholder? *Nature* 396:321–3.

Topic B: What do women want in a man? Evolutionary psychologists believe that women exercise female choice in human mating systems. What criteria do (heterosexual) women use in choosing a mate?

Buss, D.M. et al. 1991. International preferences in selecting mates: A study of 37 cultures. *Cross-Cultural Psychology* 21:5–47.

Perrett, D. I., K.J. Lee, I. Penton-Voak, D. Rowland, S. Yoshikawa, D. Burt, S. Henzi, D. Castles, and S. Akamatsu. 1998. Effects of sexual dimorphism on facial attractiveness. *Nature* 394:884–887.

Due date: A polished draft of this paper is due in class on **Monday, October 9.**
The revised version of this paper is due in class on **Monday, October 23.**

3. A five-page "laboratory-to-breakfast table" analysis (popular media paper). (WF) We learn most of what we know about scientific research on biology and gender from the popular press. What happens to a scientific idea as it travels from the lab bench to your morning newspaper? How is scientific information "translated" by the press for the general public? Is press coverage of such research accurate, objective, and complete? Follow these steps to complete this assignment:

A. Choose a well-publicized scientific paper, published since 1995, that addresses biological differences between human groups. If you are unsure if your choice is appropriate, discuss it with me. Alternatively, you may base your paper on one of the following articles.

* * *

B. Begin this longer paper with a brief (about one page) summary of the research and results as described above.

C. In the remaining four pages, **critically consider mass media reporting of the research** described in the scientific source. What aspect of the research was emphasized? Was anything important omitted? Were the results accepted uncritically? Were conflicting opinions discussed? How did different popular articles differ from each other? This paper will require some library research since you *must cite at least two non-scientific articles* about the research paper.

D. Attach copies of your research sources to your completed paper.

- **Research sources:** Search the CD-ROM databases in Memorial, Middleton, or Steenbock Library (staff are very helpful if you aren't familiar with this technology). Use multiple terms in your search; try the author's name and home institution, together with general terms like *menstruation* or *homosexuality*. Avoid excessive specificity. Try searching indices like *The New York Times*, or the *Washington Post* for newspaper articles. For periodicals like newsweeklies or women's magazines try Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature or Lexus Nexus. If you want to effectively criticize the original scientific article, the media response, or both, you will probably need to cite some scientific sources as well.

- Database searching is very thorough and ultimately a big timesaver, but it may take you a while to learn to use it efficiently. Start this assignment early.
- List your sources at the end of the paper, using the reference style described above.
- This paper should be about **five double-spaced pages**, typewritten, and is worth 20% of your grade.

Due date: A polished draft of this paper is due in class on **Monday, November 20.**
The revised version of this paper is due in class on **Wednesday, December 6.**

WS530Summary of Written Assignment Due Dates

1. Take-home worksheet: "Baby X Revisited"	Monday Sept 11
2. 1-page summary: "From vigilance to violence" Friday Sept 29†	
or:	
1-page summary: "Does facial attractiveness honestly advertise..." Wednesday Oct 4†	
3. *Evolutionary psychology paper	Monday Oct 9
4. 1-page summary: "Menstrual cycle symptomatology..." Friday Oct 13†	
or:	
1-page summary: "Estrogen-related variation..." Monday Oct 16†	
5. Revised evolutionary psychology paper	Wednesday Oct 25
6. Midterm examination (in class)	Monday Oct 30
7. *Popular media paper	Monday Nov 20
8. Revised popular media paper	Wednesday Dec 6

†You should submit only two 1-page summaries; choose one paper to summarize from each pair.
*Work with your Writing Fellow on these assignments

Dr. Janet Batzli and Dr. Michelle Harris demonstrate how writing is a key part of science curriculum—from experimental design to drafting research proposals to giving and receiving feedback.

Dr. Janet Batzli
Dr. Michelle Harris
Biocore

CURRICULUM SCAFFOLDING IN WRITING FOR SCIENCE RESEARCH

Scientific writing and research are central to the learning goals and progression of the three lab courses within the Biology Core Curriculum (Biocore). We have designed a lab course curriculum to help students align the process of independent scientific research, scientific reasoning, and scientific communication.

In the first course (Biocore 382), we begin this process by having students experience several cycles of asking questions, proposing research, gathering data, and making conclusions—in a fairly guided manner. As the curriculum moves to the second (Biocore 384) and third (Biocore 486) lab courses and students gain familiarity for how research progresses, each unit becomes less guided, more rigorous and students develop their identities as researchers and scientific writers and speakers. With each step, there are opportunities for students to gain experience outlining a research question, presenting a research proposal for feedback, writing a research proposal in the form of a paper or scientific poster, giving and receiving feedback through peer review, getting feedback from instructors, gathering data and, finally, communicating research results in a formal presentation, scientific poster or paper.

Below we outline key elements of the multi-step, iterative learning progression that we scaffold within each unit of each course within the entire Biocore lab curriculum.

Writing Element (group or individual/ graded or non-graded)	**Description**	**Approximate unit time frame**
Experimental Design Worksheet or Discussion (group/ graded or non-graded)	Research teams of 4-6 students explore topic, make observations, do initial literature review and establish a direction for their research. The worksheet is fairly standard and asks students to identify a testable question, a tentative rationale for research, preliminary hypothesis, a sketch of their experimental design, expected results, and a list of primary literature papers they have consulted so far. The worksheet provides initial guidance and structure in the first lab. In semesters 2 & 3, teams work through key elements via discussion.	Week 1
Informal Feedback presentation (group/ non-graded)	Teams present their research proposal in the form of a group PowerPoint presentation built on the basis of their experimental design worksheet. Components of the presentation include study question, background information, biological rationale, hypothesis, methods, expected and alternative results usually in the form of figures with hypothetical data, implications of expected results and questions they still have. Each group has 20 min to present and solicit feedback from their peers (and instructors). Instructors encourage peer feedback and if necessary guide discussion to focus on hypothesis and biorationale rather than the methods.	Week 2
Written research proposal (poster or paper) with formal peer review (individual/ graded)	Teams sort through feedback from their presentation, revise their ideas and direction, and write a formal research proposal in the form of a paper or scientific poster (mini-poster 1 page print out of a PowerPoint slide) using guidelines from the Biocore Writing Manual (http://www.biocore.wisc.edu/bioresources.html). Proposals are usually written individually. Each student is assigned a peer review partner outside of their research team. Students peer review drafts of their partner's proposals through paper exchange, written feedback and conferencing. Following peer review, students revise their drafts, respond to their peer review partner's comments through authors response form and submit their proposal to their teaching assistant for grading and further feedback.	Week 3
TA feedback and conference (individual)	TA's grade students' papers using Biocore rubrics in the Biocore Writing Manual. During the process of grading, TAs often do several norming sessions with fellow TAs and instructors to communicate common or unique issues, gain insight from other graders, and evaluate student work equitably between sections. Norming is done quickly for proposals (within ~1 week) so that TAs can gather and disperse feedback to students prior to starting their experiments. Each student meets with their TA for a writing conference at least once during the semester (ideally after the first paper—particularly for students that are struggling with writing). Conferences last 10 minutes, are question driven, use the rubric as guide, and end with students developing goals for their next writing assignment.	Data collection week(s)

Final research presentation, paper or poster with peer review (individual or group/ graded)	Research teams gathered and discuss input from their TA and other instructors that can improve their research. They conduct their experiment, analyze data, interpret patterns, formulate conclusions with support from the literature, and communicate their research in the form of a final paper or scientific poster (mini-poster 1 page print out OR large format printed poster formally presented) using guidelines from the Biocore Writing Manual. TAs and instructors grade the final papers/ posters with both 'local' and 'global' feedback to promote learning in subsequent research units. Often times, students are handing in final papers at the same time they are beginning a new unit, changing research teams and developing a new experimental design worksheet-- starting the process over again, scaffolding and building their writing and research skills over time.	~Week 5 (if formal presentations) OR Week 1 of new unit (if final papers)

Example of how key writing elements are incorporated into the syllabus of Biocore 382

Biocore 382: Ecology, Genetics and Evolution Laboratory - Fall 2014 Schedule					
Week/ (date)	***Topic***	***Disc Activities and In-Class Check Assignments***	***Lab Activities***	***Graded and Check Assignment due in Lab (done individually unless specified)***	***Weight****
How do you DO the Process of Science in Ecology Genetics and Evolution?					
ECOLOGY: How do you generate testable questions?					
Sept. 2-6	**Terrestrial Ecology - Prairie**	NO Discussion Sections	Field trip to Biocore Prairie (meet in 341 Noland)	√ Pre-lab assignment due in lab √ Collect exploratory data	
Sept. 8-12	**Aquatic Ecology- Stream**	Intro to writing and PR in Biocore lab? Develop testable questions for creek?—similar to presemester assign?	Field work at Willow Creek & University Bay (meet at Willow Creek)	**Paper review worksheet (1/pair) &** Group Effort Analysis (GEA) form	**4%**
How do you design experiments?					
Sept. 15-19	**Experimental Design**	√ Experimental design worksheet before disc *Hypoth/ Expected Results Activity *Teams prepare feedback presentation slides	Informal Feedback Presentations - Ecology research proposal *Identifying knowledge gap activity	**Experimental Design Prelab** √ Materials and schedule sheet- detailing how, when, and who will perform each step of experiment (1/team)	**4%**
How do you to measure complex systems?					
Sept. 22-26	**Data Collection**	√ Formal Peer Review: Exchange paper drafts with partner and complete review at least 24h before disc. *Focus on Peer Review (PR): our expectations	*Field work at Biocore Prairie or Willow Creek- (groups meet at field site) *Experiment set up and data collection	**Ecology Research Proposal** & GEA & Authors response due 48 h after disc& **Peer Review (PR)**	**12%** **2%**
How do you work with data? How do you construct new knowledge?					
Sept. 29- Oct. 3	**Data Analysis & Interpretation**	*Data entry and Intro to Excel	Data Analysis; Discussion & Conclusion Activity	√ Individual conferences with TA for Ecology Paper- outside of class (time varies) **Data Analysis Prelab**	**2%**
ECOLOGY INTO GENETICS: How do you generate testable questions?...something about Variation??					
Oct. 6-10	**Cell Division & Life Cycles: Genetic Variation**	√ Formal peer review: Exchange paper drafts with partner and complete review at least 24h before disc.	Cell Division and Plant Life Cycles	**Ecology Final Research Paper** & author's response & GEA **& Peer review** √ Cell, flower & fruit drawings and observations	**15%** **2%**

Through a carefully sequenced series of short assignments, Professor David McDonald gives students opportunities to develop their ideas and work with multiple genres throughout the semester.

Professor David McDonald
History 201

SEQUENCING SHORT ASSIGNMENTS THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER IN A HISTORY SYLLABUS

The July Crisis, 1914, and the Coming of the Great War

This course pursues two related objectives. First, as an introduction to "the historian's craft" which offers Comm-B credit, it will acquaint students with the primary elements of historical research, writing, and exposition. The course does so through the pursuit of its second objective, a careful reconstruction of the events during the six-odd weeks spanning the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Habsburg throne in Austria-Hungary, and the outbreak of what contemporaries called "The Great War" during the summer of 1914. The instructors and the students will work toward both sets of objectives through twice-weekly lectures and weekly discussion/workshop meetings. Lectures will provide broad background and context, examining the germane aspects of European history from 1871 until 1914; students will conduct assigned readings in connection with this part of the course. As important, the weekly discussions/workshops will serve as forums in which participants will discuss assigned section readings, in addition to the techniques of research and historical writing that the course teaches. Attendance at the latter is mandatory.

As the semester progresses, students will research the development of the "July crisis" by using translated diplomatic correspondence from the Great Powers (Germany, France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and the United Kingdom), as well as Serbia. In addition, you will contextualize these documents with other sorts of readings. These include newspaper and magazine accounts from the time, which provided information and perspectives absent from diplomatic reports. In the final three weeks of the course, you will also read limited auxiliary materials—memoirs and "secondary" literature. These activities should teach you how to weigh and use evidence in reconstructing "what really happened" in particular historical circumstances. Learning the difficulties of such reconstruction will also introduce you to what historians do: draw upon primary evidence to advance arguments about what they think happened and why.

This research will help you fulfill the other objectives that attach to this course as a Communications-B class. By the date set for the final examination, you will hand in a 12-15 page paper discussing the events that precipitated the Great War. This paper will represent the final distillation of several other shorter papers that you will write, and often revise, during the semester. Some of these papers you will share with your colleagues in the class; others you will give to the instructors for evaluation and editing. In addition, you will make one formal oral presentation to the class; you will also contribute to each week's ongoing discussions.

All of these exercises seek, directly and indirectly, to deepen and strengthen your understanding of the interactions that brought Europe into a general war in August 1914. To lend further focus to this understanding, and to help orient your final paper, early in the semester you will draw, by lottery, the name of one of the participants in the diplomacy leading to the declarations of war in August. You will follow events from this character's point of view, which you will incorporate into your final paper. In addition, you will keep a dossier composed of all your written assignments for this course. When you submit your final paper, you will also submit a brief (400-600 word) assessment of what you learned about historical writing.

Your grade from the course will reflect your performance in various phases of its activities. Your final paper will count for 25%, as will your participation in weekly discussions, combined with your final self-assessment. Your formal oral presentation will count for 15%. The balance of your grade comes from your briefer assignments. Your readings are located in several spots—the stacks of Memorial and College Libraries, Microforms, and the Reserve Desk at the College Library. Each week, you will receive a list of readings, offering several options, so as to ensure that all participants have access to relevant material. In the course of the semester, you should become well acquainted with the library.

Final Debates

The last meetings will see four debates of twenty-five minutes each. Each session will see a contest between two teams, each representing either the Entente powers or the Triple Alliance partners. Each side will present an argument demonstrating the opposite's sides responsibility for the outbreak of the war—this could mean a whole alliance, or the actions of one or another member of that coalition. These actions could in turn refer to specific positions or actions taken during the crisis or a given power's or group's contributions to developments reflected in the July crisis itself. Each side will open proceedings with a five-minute presentation offering its argument, with order of play determined by a preliminary coin toss. Following these presentations, each side will have five minutes to rebut specific claims in their opponents' presentation. These will occur in the same order as the original statements. Finally, each side will offer a brief concluding statement of five minutes: this statement can offer added rebuttal. In this concluding phase, teams will reverse the order of presentation. Following the conclusion of proceedings, the class will vote on which team carried the day. Presentations can use any and all supporting media. Teams should ensure that as many members speak as possible, or that individuals receive explicit acknowledgment for their contributions, if they do not speak.

Submission of Final Paper
Please submit the final copy of your paper, accompanied by your written self-assessment and the full portfolio of the semester's written work, by 4:30 pm, December 20.

Short Assignments
ASSIGNMENT 1
Write a three-page account of what occurred on 28 June. Make use of TWO of the readings listed below. The *British Documents* and *Outbreak* are on reserve at the College Library Reserve room, on the first floor of Helen C. White Library; *Collected Diplomatic Documents* are held on microfilm in the Microforms collection on the fourth floor of Memorial Library. Since you have a maximum of three hours to use the reserved materials, you might consider photocopying the relevant pages. Alternatively, use the internet links I have provided below. In compiling your account, read *only* the correspondence for the dates from June 28 to July 2.

In formulating your account, and in preparing for classroom discussion, try to determine what your correspondents knew about the assassination, as opposed to what they think happened. Based only on the assigned materials, what do you know about who wrote your materials and those from whom they obtained their information? Since most of them wrote from their offices in Vienna, how did they know what they knew? Do you find evidence that they speculated about certain things that became clearer in later dispatches/letters? In addition, make sure to include footnotes at appropriate points in the paper.

As important, make sure to footnote properly and clearly *every* fact or interpretive claim that you derived from the source materials you read. Finally, as you prepare for class, try to distinguish among the different sorts of documents you find in your sources. What is the difference between telegrams, letters, dispatches, and other documents? Why do you see certain types of correspondence used in certain situations?

> G. P. Gooch and H. Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, pp. 12-18.
> [also: http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1914m/gooch/firstpps.htm]
>
> *German Diplomatic Documents, 1871-1914*, vol. 4. [on reserve in College Library]
>
> [on microfilm] *Collected Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War*: from the French *Yellow Book*, events from 28 June to 3 July (p. 144ff.); from the Austro-Hungarian *Red Book*, pp. 448-452.
>
> *The French Yellow Book*: http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/papers/yellow1.htm

ASSIGNMENT 2
Write a revision and expansion (to 6pp.) of the paper you submitted this week, incorporating materials from *The Times* of London (online) for the period from 28 June through 4 July. In addition, use accounts from one of the following, or a journal/newspaper of your choice from the same period. If you have any difficulty locating one or another publication, do not hesitate to ask library employees for their help. Make sure to correct or insert footnotes as indicated by your instructor on your last version. Strive to adhere to these conventions in this and future drafts.

The Economist	The Illustrated London News (online or in hard copy)
The Contemporary Review	The New York Times (online)

ASSIGNMENT 3
For next week's section you have two assignments, neither of them written. First, we ask you to follow events as they develop in the diplomatic correspondence between the dates of 4 and 22 July. Second, in taking notes, try to view the unfolding events from the perspective of the figure you were assigned by your section leader over the weekend.
Read from two of the following:

> *British Documents on the Origins of the War*
> [on microfilm and online] *Collected Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War*: the French *Yellow Book*, the Russian *Orange Book*, the German *White Book,* or the Austro-Hungarian *Red Book*.

ASSIGNMENT 4
Instructors will have addressed this assignment in last week's section. Your education in historical techniques moves from emphasis on issues of mechanics and convention—e.g., responsible use of evidence, proper attribution of sources—to modes of presentation. The passive voice often muddies or begs questions of cause and effect, i.e., who did what to whom and why or how? While modern editors and teachers probably overemphasize recourse to the passive voice, you should find it challenging, and ideally useful, to write the next part of your evolving account with attention to avoiding this indulgence.

ASSIGNMENT 5
Over the next week, you should read diplomatic correspondence and press accounts covering the events of 23-26 July 1914. Use the same list of sources for press accounts that you have for earlier assignments, although we encourage you to try new sources, even if not listed previously (in which case, alert your instructor).

Over the next two weeks, you will make a ten-minute presentation on events from late June until 26 July as witnessed/experienced by your “character.” Given the likelihood of duplication and overlap, those of you dealing with the same character have the option of collaborating or presenting individually; collaborative presentations should take 15-20 minutes. These presentations should incorporate several elements. Introduce your character—his position, where he serves, what government he represents, etc. Then tell your audience when and how your character became involved in the crisis as it began to brew. When setting up this part of your presentation, ask yourself certain questions: what roles does your character play; does he change or deepen his view as events proceed; does he change his mind; if he becomes involved belatedly, how do you explain that fact; when he makes predictions about what to expect, do those predictions and their seriousness change over time; does he assign blame or credit in any way? In short, when does each of your characters begin to appreciate that a real crisis is under way? **Participants will have a brief period to ask questions after each presentation, as well as after all presentations have been completed.**

ASSIGNMENT 6
Through readings in ONE newspaper, ONE magazine, and at least TWO sets of published diplomatic correspondence, follow the diplomacy generated by the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum from 26 July, until the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war on Serbia on 28 July. Using these materials, write a 4-6pp. paper narrating these events from the viewpoint of your character. In writing this narrative, you can adopt the persona of your character, if that helps. Above all, however, remember to write a clear story, giving your reader an understanding of how one event/response led to the next—try to keep the sequence as clear as possible. Also, remember to include a footnote *each* time you use your diplomatic and press sources. Hand your papers to the instructor at the beginning of class Thursday, or email them as a separate attachment.

ASSIGNMENT 7
Using *ONLY* the published diplomatic correspondence, write a 4-6pp. paper narrating developments from the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war on Serbia until midnight on July 30. When possible, place your assigned character in the heart of your narrative, whether taking his point of view or looking at what he says and knows during these days. In putting your story together, pay close attention to the chronology of events: all your documents will contain some sort of indication as to the timing of the encounters or actions they describe. Submit your papers at the beginning of class on November 17.

ASSIGNMENT 8
Enjoy the break according to your or your family’s traditions, as circumstances permit. For the following week, the instructors ask you to revise and expand by 1-2 pp. your previous paper. This time, incorporate journalistic interpretations for events from the ultimatum through the Austrian declaration of war on Serbia, using the newspapers and magazines you have consulted throughout the semester, while incorporating corrections suggested by your instructor for the previous assignment. Submit the revised and expanded paper at the beginning of class, on December 1.

ASSIGNMENT 9
Find and read the relevant parts of a memoir or historical account dealing with the July crisis, ideally a work that focuses on your character. Many of our protagonists left memoirs to explain their part in events or to explain the reasons for the war. In discussion, we will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of memoirs as a source for historical insight. When reading the account you have chosen, try to compare the narrator’s account with the viewpoint you have developed in consulting the primary and press sources. How do you explain any discrepancies? Does the memoir reflect any biases on the author’s part? If so, why, do you think? Alternatively, does this new source make you able to discern biases in the primary and press sources? How might you explain these? While reading the memoir, start to ready a preliminary draft of your final paper, which will give your character’s account for the reasons the Great War took place.

ASSIGNMENT 10
While we will no longer meet in section, you will have work to do as you prepare the final work for this class. First, you should take part in preparation for the final debates, which will occupy the last week of class meetings. As important, or more so, you should be working on the final version of your paper. By now, you will have assembled substantial primary and press materials on the course of the July crisis. These papers will provide the backbone for your final paper. This last work should incorporate a memoir source, as well as at least *one* secondary source, i.e., a historian’s account of the July crisis. These exist in abundance, since the reasons for the Great War have fueled one of the widest ranging scholarly debates in the history of, well, history writing. If you have doubts about what to choose or you need advice, talk to or email one of the instructors. You have until 4:30 on the afternoon of December 20 to submit your final written work. This packet should include your final paper, your statement of self-assessment on what you learned in this course, and the full portfolio of your written work to date for this course. Be sure to inform your instructors in good time should unforeseen circumstances prevent your punctual submission of the work. You will not receive a penalty for early submission.

These goals for History 201, which were developed collaboratively by history faculty, guide the design of assignments in this writing-intensive course for history majors.

GOALS FOR HISTORY 201–THE HISTORIAN'S CRAFT

The Historian's Craft courses offer an opportunity to experience the excitement and rewards of doing original historical research and conveying the results of that work to others. Through engagement with locally available or on-line archival materials, the courses encourage undergraduates to become historical detectives who can define important historical questions, collect and analyze evidence, present original conclusions, and contribute to ongoing discussions—the skills we have defined as central to the history major.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be prepared to undertake substantial historical research and writing in a variety of courses, including the HIST 600 seminar. Specific goals for this course include learning to:

1. **Ask Questions**: Develop the habit of asking questions, including questions that may generate new directions for historical research.

    - Develop historical questions through engagement with primary sources, secondary literature, and/or broader ethical, theoretical, or political questions.
    - Ask historical questions to guide individual research.
    - Pose questions to prompt productive group discussion.

2. **Find Sources**: Learn the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, search engines, libraries, and archives, and consult them to identify and locate source materials.

    - Identify the purposes, limitations, authorities, and parameters of various search engines available both through the library and on the world-wide web.
    - Take advantage of the range of library resources, including personnel.
    - Locate printed materials, digital materials, and other objects.
    - Be aware of, and able to use, interlibrary loan.

3. **Evaluate Sources**: Determine the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials.

    - Distinguish between primary and secondary material for a particular topic.
    - Determine, to the extent possible, conditions of production and preservation.
    - Consider the placement of sources in relation to other kinds of documents and objects.
    - Identify the perspective or authorial stance of a source.
    - Summarize an argument presented in a text.
    - Distinguish between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question.

4. **Develop an Argument**: Use sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions.

    - Write a strong, clear thesis statement.
    - Revise and rewrite a thesis statement based on additional research or analysis.
    - Identify the parts of an argument necessary to support a thesis convincingly.
    - Cite, paraphrase, and quote evidence appropriately to support each part of an argument.

5. **Plan Further Research**: Draw upon preliminary research to develop a plan for further investigation.

    - Write a research proposal, including a tentative argument, plan for research, annotated bibliography, and abstract.
    - Identify the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship.

6. **Present Findings**: Make formal and informal, written and oral presentations tailored to specific audiences.

In this three-part case study assignment, students conduct a thorough investigation of place-based poverty and write critical analyses and supporting data reports to explain their findings.

Professor Leann Tigges
Community and Environmental Sociology

POVERTY AND PLACE CASE STUDY IN COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY 578

Part 1: Using Structural Theories Of Poverty To Understand Place-Based Inequality

Suggested length about 5 double-spaced pages, excluding appendices; 1" margins; Times New Roman 11pt font. . Worth 10% of final grade. Assuming a 100-point grading rubric, I have indicated the relative weight of each section below. As you can see, grades primarily will be based on the extent to which the readings and lectures are accurately and thoughtfully incorporated into the paper

Format

Title: Part One, county (or reservation) and state, your name, date. Place this information centered at the top of the first page of text, not on a separate page. Use the same font as in the rest of the paper.

Introduction: Brief "qualitative" description of your case. You should not have sentences full of statistics, rather your introduction should engage the reader in a description that offers a sense of what the place is like. You may refer to table numbers from the data appendix, but you should not engage in a description of these tables. Writing out data already in tables is a waste of time and space (and is boring to read). Think about addressing some of the following questions: What does your case "look" like? What is the history of poverty there? Is this county one of those designated as "persistently poor"? Is poverty increasing or decreasing? What is the physical and social environment of this place? How do the media or politicians portray the poverty and hardship there (reservation/county, if possible, or state or region)? You should "google" your case name, major communities within that place, and "poor" or "poverty," to see if anything interesting comes up. If nothing specific about your case is revealed, try terms with a larger geography, for example: "rural Iowa" or "western Illinois" or "central Appalachia."

You should draw on your summaries of the data reports but do not simply repeat them. Instead, selectively use the information to provide a textured description of life in this place. (2 paragraphs, 20 points)

Individual and Structural Theories of Poverty Applied to Places: Draw on the reading assigned for Sept. 8 through Oct. 6, as well as information from class sessions, to <u>critically review the main theories about poverty and apply the ideas to place-based poverty</u>. Note the similarities and contrasts between your case and that of your partner (identify partner by name and name of his/her place). Particular questions to consider: What are the weaknesses of individual theories of poverty that a place-based study could help reveal? How do "common beliefs" about the poor, ideas about culture and structure accord with data on poverty in the US generally and in these cases? What do the descriptive data from your and your partner's cases suggest about individual sources of poverty and about structural sources? (3-4 pages, 50 points)

Conclusion: Briefly summarize the preceding sections. Looking ahead, what factors seem to be important to understand the structural forces influencing poverty in your case? What puzzles you about your case? (1 paragraph, 5 points)

4 Appendices (20 points – 5 for A and B; 15 for C and D):

A. *Works Cited* (style of citation and bibliography according to ASA Citation Guide)
B. State map indicating location of case (check google images)
C. Six Data Reports
D. Summary of 6 Data Reports

Quality of writing: Grammar, sentence and paragraph construction, spelling, proof-read. (5 points)

Note: You must provide information about your sources (use ASA citation style provided in "instructions" section of "Content" tab). Failure to properly cite your sources will lead to deductions of up to 5 points for style, or a failing grade if there is evidence of plagiarism (consult http://www.writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html).

Clarification of Data Reports Requirement

1) A report contains multiple tables, but is downloaded as a single excel file. It is this page of tables that I want kept together and the summary to address the whole set of tables. When you download a "report" to Excel, you have a page or two, which you should preserve as a separate document or file. You will write a summary about each report (file), not about each table (T6, T13, etc.). So, there will be a "demographic profile report" with the 9 tables, an "income profile" report with up to 11 tables (depending on the race/ethnic makeup of the county), and a "poverty profile" report with at least 5 tables2) How long should the summary be?

2) The summary for each report should be a paragraph of approximately four or five sentences, telling the story of the data in the profile report. For example, for the demographic profile data, your summary should tell us what the county's population looks like and how it is different (or not) from the state and nation, or how it is different (or not) from the stereotypical poverty population. Don't go line by line, or table by table. Pick out what you want your reader to know and tell that story, without overwhelming us with numbers. Some of the "additional reports" (such as the poverty trend data) will tell you a simple story that will only needs a couple of sentences.

3) How should I put this all together?
Each data report should be separate (though it is also fine to combine the excel documents into a single file with separate tabs for each report). If you have already put the summaries at the end of each corresponding data report, you can keep them there. But I would also like you to combine the summaries into a single document that you can print 2 copies of and bring to class on Thursday (10/1) -- please put your name, and email address on the top of the page and be sure the title tells the case name (county, state). You will give your partner one copy and turn in one copy to me. That will really help me with reading and also help your partner.

Part 2: How the political economic structure of places produces poverty and inequality

15% of final grade, 7 pages plus tables
Nov. 18 By 8pm: Tables and summaries, submitted to *Learn*
Nov. 19 In class: Meet with partner I assign to compare and discuss your data
Nov. 24 In class: Submit paper that identifies and interprets salient dimensions of the economic structure, drawing comparisons with partner's county (hardcopy turned in and electronic copy uploaded to Learn).
Hard copy due at the start of class and electronic copy in *Learn@UW* drop-box Nov. 24 (11am).

Suggested length about 7 double-spaced pages, excluding appendices; 1" margins; Times New Roman 11pt font

Using a 100-point grading rubric, I have indicated the relative weight of each section below. As you can see, grades primarily will be based on the extent to which the readings and lectures are accurately and thoughtfully incorporated into the paper and your data correctly interpreted.

Format**:**

Title: Part Two, county (and reservation) and state, your name, date. Place this information centered at the top of the first page of text, not on a separate page. Use the same font as in the rest of the paper.

Introduction: Briefly summarize the dimensions of poverty in your case, drawing from Part One and introducing key questions asked in Part Two. (1 paragraph, 5 points)

Political economic dimensions of place-based poverty: <u>Draw on the reading</u> assigned for Oct. 13 through Nov. 19, as well as information from class sessions and any relevant information from the first part of the course, <u>to discuss and interpret each of the four dimensions of political economic structure</u> of your data profiles. Use the literature and lectures to interpret the data and discuss the significance of it (refer to particular tables as is helpful). Note the similarities and contrasts between your case and that of your partner (identify partner by name and name of his/her place). What do the descriptive data from your and your partner's cases suggest about the role of opportunity structures in the production of poverty? How do these data help explain the differential economic vulnerability of different groups and places? (5-6 pages, 60 points)

Conclusion: Briefly summarize the main insights into the poverty of your case provided by the data in this section of the course. Apply C. Wright Mills key questions of "The Sociological Imagination" to understand poverty in your case. (1 page, 10 points)

3 Appendices: (20 points)

A. *Works Cited* (style of citation and bibliography according to ASA Citation Guide)
B. *Four Data Reports* – Those tables indicated in the guidelines plus additional relevant information. Indicate source at the bottom of each table by citing URL produced by the "link" button on <u>Social Explorer</u> and by copying the URL for the additional reports. See instructions.
C. *Summary of Data Reports.* Quality counts. Summarize.

Part 3: Social, Community and Policy Factors in the (Re)Production of Poor Places
16-18 pages

Requirements for the third installment of your case study are described below. Papers are due on Dec. 15. However, I will grant extensions without penalty until Monday Dec. 21st at 4pm. Please talk to me if you need extra time beyond that. At a minimum, you should have the data reports done by Dec. 15, 11:00, and a hard copy of your data summaries turned in then. Please upload your full paper and bring a hard copy to my office when you finish.

This paper should be organized into the following sections:
1) *Introduction and overview*. Summarize important findings from previous parts of the case study. Provide a rich description that lays out the challenges that policy needs to address. (1 page, 10 pts)
2) *Analysis*. How do political and social factors identified in the data section of this part affect the wellbeing of residents in your case study area? Be sure to use the literature from the course to interpret or explain any important piece of data or conclusion you draw. (5 pages, 50 pts)
3) *Discussion and conclusion*. What are the implications of your findings for improving the wellbeing and diminishing the hardships of the residents? What are the main obstacles to prosperity? What policy changes would help reduce poverty levels in your case? (2 pages, 20 pts)
4) *Appendices.* Bibliography, data appendices, and data summaries (8-10 pages, not including tables, 20 pts)

*Required Data Appendices***:** Each table or paragraph should have a title at the top and a "source" note at the bottom. You do not need to print the entire table if your data is a single line of it.

A. Social capital
Retrieve 2009 social capital data for your county.
http://aese.psu.edu/nercrd/community/social-capital-resources/social-capital-variables-for-1997-2005-and-2009/social-capital-variables-spreadsheet/view
These are the variables that of special interest: **assn09**: The aggregate number of voluntary associations (divided by population per 10,000) divided by 10; **pvote08:** Voter turnout; **respn10**: Census response rate; **nccs09**: Number of non-profit organizations without including those with an international approach; **sk09**: Social capital index created using principal component analysis using the above four factors. Note that the Social Capital index number is only meaningful in a relative sense. In 2009, the values ranged from a low of -3.94 to a high of 8.85 (with one outlier that had a value of 17.55). If you want to see if components of social capital has declined, you can compare the four variables over time. For your convenience I have placed the spreadsheet and variables description files from this site in the "case study" folder of "Content" area in Learn.
Here is the appropriate citation for the data use:
Rupasingha, Anil and Stephan J. Goetz, "US County-Level Social Capital Data, 1990-2005." The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, Penn State University, University Park, PA, 2008.

B. Housing affordability, stress and instability

C. Public policies:
Explore the public policies that affect poverty and the poor in your case study state and county.

1. State and local tax policies
2. Welfare spending -- How does the state allocate the block grant monies that come from the federal government as part of PROWRA? What is the level of benefit from TANF?
3. What about food assistance in your county?
4. Health Insurance coverage
5. Education
6. Overall, what effect does the safety net have on child poverty in your state, as measured by the Supplemental Poverty Measure? Use the data from the Dec. 3 class reading "state child spm".
7. Check out county and state websites to find other relevant information about public policies for your state and localities. Are there any particular policies of your state or locality that are relevant to economic well-being in your case? Are there any recent policy changes that would affect eligibility for public assistance for food, housing, schooling, etc.? Who is excluded from these programs?

TA Mytoan Nguyen emphasizes the importance of writing in a sociology course. She explains writing expectations, identifies relevant campus resources, and illustrates the research process with smaller assignments that culminate in a semester-long research paper and presentation.

Mytoan Nguyen
Sociology 210

SEQUENCING SMALLER ASSIGNMENTS TO SUPPORT A SEMESTER-LONG RESEARCH PAPER IN SOCIOLOGY

Teaching Assistant: Mytoan Nguyen
Office: 7110 Sewell Social Science Bldg
Office Hours: Tues 3:15-4:15 and by appointment
E-mail: mnguyen@ssc.wisc.edu

Professor: Chad A. Goldberg
Office: 8116B Sewell Social Science Bldg
7101 Sewell Social Science Bldg
E-mail: cgoldber@ssc.wisc.edu

Course Website:	http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~cgoldber	
Lecture:	Tues & Thurs 2:25-3:15 pm	
Section 302: 6121 Social Science	Mon & Wed	8:50-9:40 am
Section 308: 5231 Social Science	Wed & Fri	9:55-10:45 am

Purpose of Section

Sociology 210: Survey of Sociology will introduce you to what it means to employ a "sociological imagination" as a tool to think about the world around you. The class is a 4-credit course that fulfills the University's Comm-B requirement. By the end of the semester, you are expected to develop advanced skills in a) critical reading, logical thinking, and the use of evidence; b) the use of appropriate conventions in writing and speaking in a social scientific academic style; and c) the productive use of core library resources specific to Sociology.

Learning how to write and speak at a college level are skills that are applicable to any area of study or career. Regardless of writing experience or level, your writing will get a lot of attention in this course. Sections with me as your TA are meant to provide you with a venue to discuss concepts and themes taught in an introductory course in Sociology. Students in the class are expected to engage with the information in lecture and from the readings to develop their reasoned viewpoints and to present and defend their thoughts in a critical way. Students are expected to keep up-to-date with the lecture and section syllabus, hand in assignments on time, and to ask questions if instructions are not clear.

Discussion sections meet twice a week. Attendance is required. Your work in discussion section makes up the majority of your final grade in this class. You will not pass this class without satisfactory work and participation in discussion section. Topics for discussion sections, as outlined in the calendar, include:
- **Workshops on Writing:** Topics will include how to formulate a research question, finding and using sources, making a sociological argument, and using evidence to support your argument. No matter what your level of experience with sociological research and writing, these exercises should be useful to you.
- **Discussions:** Throughout the semester we will have section discussions and activities that will integrate the readings, lecture material and contemporary events of sociological interest. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

Rules

Paper Guidelines: These guidelines apply for EVERY WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT. Points will be deducted for papers that do not conform to this writing style.
- Always double-space
- Always use 12-point Times New Roman font
- Top and bottom margins should be 1"
- Left and right margins should be 1.25"
- Always use page numbers
- Always staple your papers
- You may print on the front and back of the page
- For citation style to document your sources, refer to the American Sociological Association (ASA) style guide, Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), or Associate Press (AP) style guides for how to list author, title, publisher, date, and other details about the source you are using.

Late papers will be docked a letter grade per day. See me ahead of time if you think you are going to have difficulty meeting a deadline.

Absences/lateness. Attendance at lecture and section is required. Lectures provide you with the background needed to participate in discussions. Participation in section is a major part of your final grade in the class. Out of respect for your classmates and me, please make it to class on time. If you are late to class by more than 15 minutes, you will not receive credit for participation. Absence at more than three classes will result in deduction of points from the attendance portion of your final grade. I will be taking attendance at every discussion section.

Discussion Conduct. Please note that this is a discussion section. This is not a second lecture session. Discussing and engaging with class material is an essential aspect of learning. Your fellow students are an important resource in the learning process. During our survey of the discipline of sociology, we will be delving into many controversial issues. This is an exciting opportunity to learn from each other and to broaden our perspectives. In order to achieve a comfortable discussion environment for all, I ask you to abide by the following rules:

- Treat everyone in your section, including your TA, with respect. Name-calling, excessive interrupting, and domination of discussion are not appropriate and will be addressed by the TA if they become problems. They will also have a negative impact on your discussion grade.

- Sections are a “correctness-free” space. This means that everyone in the section is free to express opinions and ask questions without fear of censure from other section members. You can disagree with an opinion without insulting the opinion holder. I feel very strongly that you should express your opinions, as long as they are well founded, even if you think that none of your classmates will agree. Class will be very boring and unrewarding if we all agree with each other.

Keep a copy of all your work. You will be asked to hand in previous drafts with the latest ones, so I can assess your progress. When you turn in the final paper, I will ask you to include all the previous graded work for the term paper (including annotated bibliography and outline) as well.

Assignments and Grading

I. **Research Project (40%):** You will have a 10-12 page research paper due at the end of the semester. Your final research project will entail the following components, which are due throughout the semester in discussion section. Please pay careful attention to due dates for these various components of your research project.

a. **Paper proposal** listing two to three research questions to receive feedback and approval by your TA
b. **Library Research Assignment (Approved/Try Again**): You will conduct preliminary research on the topic you may be interested in using the UW library system.
c. **Annotated Bibliography and Paper Proposal Revise (Approved/Try Again**): You will write a brief proposal, stating your research problem and your strategy for attacking that problem and providing at least four sources you intend to use in your paper.
d. **First Version of Research Paper (10%):** A polished first draft will be submitted for my review and for peer review. This is a serious first version, a complete attempt at writing the entire research paper. Please bring three copies of this to class. I will review your papers, and you will receive feedback from two peers.
e. **Peer Review Comments (10%):** You will be responsible for providing written feedback for two student papers. I will provide guidelines.
f. **Second Version of Research Paper (20%):** Taking into account my comments and your peers’ comments from the first version of your research paper, you will revise the paper. I will provide written comments on this draft and encourage you to meet with me about it.

II. 750-word Writing Assignments (30%): You will be required to write four writing assignments of 750 words each. In each of those assignments you will be required to write a critical response to the reading selections for the week. These papers should not summarize the readings, but should engage the material—what do you find most interesting, or least convincing, and why? You should react to some aspect of the material, agree or disagree with the author’s argument, compare and contrast authors’ perspectives, or critique the author based on empirical evidence. This does not mean simply saying that you like or dislike a particular reading, but why you do or do not find the reading convincing, valuable, or important. During the course of the semester, excellent and well thought-out examples from students in our section will be circulated to the class and critiqued (anonymously if this is preferred).

III. **Class Participation (10%):** Participate in discussion section! The best way to make the course more interesting is by being an active speaker and listener. I do understand that there are some people who don’t like to speak in class. Being present, alert, and interested will count in participation grading to some extent, but it is not sufficient. By sharing your thoughts and ideas, you can help each other think critically and engage the material. If your ability to speak in class will be limited, please come talk to me during office hours early in the semester.

IV. **Oral Presentation (5%):** There are two oral presentations. 1) You will be assigned to lead a five-minute discussion about a reading by giving your critical thoughts on the readings (again, not an overall summary). During this discussion, you should be asking questions to your classmates that would help them situate the work in the field of sociology and in relation to some of the readings previously covered in the class. 2) You will present a brief oral presentation about your research project to the class. More details will come later on in the semester.

V. **Exam (15%):** The exam will consist entirely of multiple choice questions designed by the professor. If you have a conflict with the final exam, please tell me as soon as possible.

Grading

Everything you hand in, whether it's worth one percent or 80 percent of your grade, will be given a letter grade of A, AB, B, BC, D, and F.

HOW I GRADE WRITTEN WORK*

- An **Excellent (A)** paper—is, in order of importance, intellectually challenging and complex, logically argued, cogently developed, clearly and compellingly written and free of basic errors in grammar, punctuation, and usage.
- A **Very Good (AB)** paper—will do one of the less important things less well.
- A **Good (B)** paper—has reasonably strong arguments and complex ideas, but may be flawed in other areas.
- A **Satisfactory (BC)** paper—has flaws in significant areas, including weaker arguments and unchallenging ideas, or it may have minor flaws in many areas.
- A **Lacking (C)** paper—has numerous flaws in significant areas.
- A **Not Very Good (D)** paper—has major problems in all areas.
- An **Unacceptable (F)** paper—has to be really bad, incomplete, incomprehensible, plagiarized, etc.

Keep in mind, this is a general, unscientific outline, meant to give you the basic expectations. In my book, your ideas are more important than your mechanics, but I do expect your papers to be polished and technically sound.

*This rubric refers to formal written work and not necessarily short response papers done in or out of class.

This assignment from Professor Gaddis' intermediate Human Ecology course asks students to "actively contribute" to scholarship on food chain workers by conducting an oral history interview with a food worker and writing a narrative essay that appropriately and accurately reflects the interviewee's story.

Professor Jennifer Gaddis
Inter-HE 375

LABOR PORTRAIT PAPER IN HUMAN ECOLOGY 375

Course Description
Inter-HE 375 Human Ecology of Food and Sustainability is an intermediate course with an enrollment of approximately 30 students who range from freshmen to seniors. The course uses food as a lens to explore the historical roots and current practice of human ecology as an interdisciplinary field dedicated to advancing social justice and community well-being. Throughout the semester, students learn about food systems—from fields to factories, retail, restaurants, and homes—via experiential learning activities and reading assignments that feature first-hand perspectives of food chain workers. This "labor portrait" paper asks students to actively contribute to the growing literature on food chain workers by collecting an original oral history that gives insight into what food chain workers do and how they feel about what they do. This paper was one of two major half-semester projects for the course. Each student submitted a polished draft of the labor portrait paper to a UW-Madison Writing Fellow and later submitted a final revised copy to be featured on the class website:www.foodchainchronicles.com

Assignment: Labor Portrait (35%)
For this project, students will conduct and record an oral history interview (45-60 minutes) with a person of their choosing. The interviewee must engage in some aspect of food work, including but not limited to: researching, growing, harvesting, processing, distributing, stocking, selling, purchasing, cooking, serving, or disposing of food. You may focus on wage-labor or domestic (unpaid) work.

The *purpose of the assignment* is threefold: (1) to develop research skills related to qualitative interviewing and data analysis, (2) to learn how to write a narrative essay that gives "voice" to the person whose story is being told, and (3) to contribute to public understanding of food work by sharing curated stories of what people do and how they feel about the work they do within food systems.

The *tasks for this assignment* are broken into steps: choice of interviewee (ungraded), a set of interview questions (**5% of grade**), an index of the oral history recording (**5% of grade**), and an essay draft for peer review (ungraded). The final product of this assignment is a written "labor portrait" of 1500-2000 words containing at least one photograph (**25% of grade**).

We will look to the table of contents, writing style, and general approach of Studs Terkel's "Working" for inspiration. Please review the readings from week 2 to familiarize yourselves with expectations for the final written product. The labor portrait will be shared publicly via www.foodchainchronicles.com if the narrator consents. In this case, you will be asked to share the final version of the labor portrait with the oral history narrator so they can make any requests for changes before we post it.

1. Selecting an interviewee
You may interview someone who specializes in a particular element of food work (i.e. growing, harvesting, packing, transporting, purchasing, preparing, or serving food) or someone who has more general experience. I will review and approve your choice. Please use the template on Learn@UW to provide the name and occupation of the person you plan to interview, a brief (1-2) sentence explanation of why you think the person will make a good interview, and a plan for how you will contact the person and collect the interview. (September 11: Choice of interviewee + justification due at 5pm on Learn@UW -- ungraded)

2. Preparing for the interview
Drawing on the materials Troy Reeves passed out in class and your notes from his lecture, you will develop a short (1-2 page) question guide for your oral history interview (5% of grade). I will provide feedback on this no later September 21. Please note the more you invest up front in generating themes, questions, and follow up responses, the more feedback I can give you.

To begin, I recommend brainstorming a list of questions and organizing them topically and/or in the order you plan to ask them. Remember that you'll need to probe for detail and rich stories. General questions typically get general answers, so you should do your best to tailor the questions to what you know about the person's food work.

In the final submission, your questions should be organized using topical headers to separate different lines of questioning or phases of the interview. I encourage you to include follow up questions and "probes" that you might consider using to help the narrator go deeper with his/her answers. If your list of questions gets too long (beyond 1.5 pages), use comments or color-coding to indicate which of the questions you view as crucial vs. questions you'd like to ask if there is extra time. (September 18: Oral history interview guide due at 5 pm on Learn@UW -- **5**

Labor Portrait Paper, continued.

3. Conducting the interview

It is up to you to schedule the interview at a time that fits both your schedule and the schedule of the narrator. If at all possible, please conduct the interview in person at a place that is quiet and convenient first and foremost for the narrator. **You must audio record the interview, which should last between 45-60 minutes**. You may use your phone or check out a digital recorder from College Library or the UW Madison Oral History Program. Troy Reeves will provide information for how to do this. If the audio is of sufficient quality, and the narrator consents, the UW-Madison Archives will house the audio file and index of the interview you collect. When you meet for the interview, ask for permission to take pictures and ask if the interviewee have any pertinent photos to share with you. You will need to have at least one high-resolution image for the Food Chain Chronicles website. Ideally you will leave the interview with at least one portrait of the *person* you interviewed. You may also want to take photos of particular objects that the person shows you. Some people don't like to have their picture taken—this is fine. Ask the oral history narrator to help decide on a photo that signifies his/her story. You must also remember to **obtain a written release from your interviewee** in order for the material to be used for this project. I will require you to **submit this in class on October 2**.

4. Analyzing the interview

After conducting and recording your interview, **you will prepare an index of the FULL 45-60 minute oral history recording (5% of grade)**. You will likely want to transcribe some parts in full (to include in the labor portrait), but this is not necessary for the index. If you're unsure how to make an oral history index, view the two examples included as an attachment with this assignment prompt. The Oral History Program website has a lot of other examples for you to peruse as well. The basic idea is to provide a time-based summary of the audio recording so that others can move through the interview and find pre-identified themes. The index should be sufficiently detailed such that you (and other researchers) can navigate the audio file and find all of the pertinent pieces. Ideally, it will allow you (and other researchers) to quickly return to pieces of the oral history without having to listen to the surrounding pieces that don't relate to the same theme/story. Make sure to highlight at least 2-3 key moments, as in the two example indexes. (Oct. 2: Oral history index, recording, and consent form due at 5 pm on Learn@UW -- **5%**)

5. Writing the labor portrait

While likely a new writing challenge for many of you, I'd like for your labor portraits to be **written from the perspective of the person you're interviewing**. If you are confused by this requirement, please refer back to the Studs Terkel portraits (Week 2). Using italics, he provides some contextual information and postscripts that are "out of character," but the rest of his prose really gives life, or voice, to the person he interviews. This is what you should strive to achieve, which is why the questions and follow up probes are so important. You must generate sufficient detail or it will be hard to write an honest, compelling labor portrait. Note that you are allowed to reorganize the person's words, but you are not allowed to fabricate experience/detail. The final portrait should be 1500-2000 words. It must include one photograph, but can include more.

You must submit a polished draft by Oct 12 and meet your assigned writing fellow for a 30-minute conference. Failure to do so will result in an automatic deduction of ten points from your final paper grade. Oct. 23: Final paper due at 5 pm on Learn@UW **-- 25% of grade**

Rubrics

Interview guide	Exemplary (A, AB)	Acceptable (B, BC)	Unacceptable (C, D, F)
Completion of assignment (____/25 pts)	Interview guide is comprehensive and detailed enough for a 45-60 minute oral history	Interview guide is somewhat short and overly broad.	Interview guide is very short and in need of major development/re-focusing.
Application of course content (____/25 pts)	Demonstrates mastery of course content by using techniques for generating questions that were discussed in class/readings	Demonstrates some engagement with course content by somewhat successfully applying techniques that were discussed in class/readings	Demonstrates little to no effort to use the techniques discussed in class or in the readings
Contextual understanding (____/25 pts)	Questions are nicely targeted to the oral history narrator	Questions could be more specific to the particular oral history narrator	Questions are totally generic; no clear evidence that the student tried tailor the list of questions to the oral history narrator
Clarity of questions and overall guide (____/25 pts)	Questions are clear. Interview guide is logically organized with groupings of questions and use of headers	Questions could be worded more clearly and/or the guide isn't very well organized	Questions are worded poorly and/or there is no logical organization to the guide
Total point score:		**Grade letter score:**	

Index	Exemplary (A, AB)	Acceptable (B, BC)	Unacceptable (C, D, F)
Length and content of interview (____/20 pts)	Length of interview at least 45-60 minutes; topics stay on point and interviewer makes good use of the pre-prepared question guide	Interview somewhat short of 45-60 minutes; topics stray somewhat afield and interviewer struggles to focus the oral history narrator using the question guide	Interview substantially shorter than required; questions and answers are off topic; seemingly little effort made to redirect the narrator to the pre-prepared questions
Abstract (____/25 pts)	Well-written, concise overview of the interviewee and the topics covered in the oral history	Overview has good content, but could be written more clearly	Overview is poorly written; there is not enough detail to give the reader a strong idea of the narrator or content
Log of interview (____/25 pts)	Clear sub-headings for different topics; time stamps and description of basic content are rich enough to allow an outside viewer to easily navigate the interview	Very little use of sub-headings; time stamps and description are easy to follow but could be more detailed	No sub-headings for different topics; little attention paid to making the index usable for future readers/researchers
Key moments (____/20 pts)	Several highlights from the interview are identified and marked as "key moments" in the interview log; contains clear explanation or direct transcription of key moment	At least one key moment is identified and explained	Either no key moments are identified or there is no explanation of the key moment
Audio file (____/5 pts)	Uploaded audio file to Box.com folder	NA	Did not upload audio file to Box.com folder
Consent form (____/5 pts)	Turned in hard copy.	NA	Did not turn in hard copy.
Total point score:		**Grade letter score:**	

Paper one (final)	Exemplary (A, AB)	Acceptable (B, BC)	Unacceptable (C, D, F)
Completion of assignment (___/15 points)	Includes Writing Fellows cover letter and has thoughtful self-evaluation; length (1500-2000 words); great title; all content drawn directly from oral history; photo included; uses italicized introductory comments and postscript where necessary	Includes Writing Fellows cover letter, but doesn't demonstrate much critical reflection; incorrect length; decent title; some content general rather than specific to oral history; photo included; missing italicized introductory comments and postscript where necessary	No Writing Fellows cover letter; substantially shorter than is required; no title; content not taken directly from oral history, no photo included; does not use italicized introductory comments and postscript where necessary
Insight into food work (___/25 points)	Clear, compelling picture of the work the person performs and how he/she feels about the work; successfully highlights experiences that relate to the gender, race, ethnicity, age, or class of interviewee	The work and/or how the person feels about the work isn't totally clear; some attempt made to highlight into how work experience is impacted by gender, race, ethnicity, age, or class	Very little attention given to the specifics of food work or how the person feels about the work; doesn't make any effort to dig deeper into how work experience is impacted by gender, race, ethnicity, age, or class
Richness and detail of the labor portrait (___/25 points)	Gives the reader a clear sense of who the narrator is and what values he/she holds; the individual experience of the person is clear	The individual experience of the narrator partially comes throught, but could be made more striking—the labor portrait lacks details that would add depth and nuance	The labor portrait doesn't give the reader a sense of the individual—it reads as if it could be about anyone
Tone and style (___/25 points)	Does a wonderful job emulating Studs Terkel's writing style; the oral history narrator's voice drives the story—the reader feels as if the narrator is speaking directly to him/her; the storytelling is fluid	Makes a clear effort to emulate Studs Terkel's style; the oral history narrator's voice is somewhat apparent – the reader feels as if the narrator is speaking directly to him/her; there are no awkward starts or stops in the storytelling	Does not succeed in emulating Studs Terkel's writing style; the student's voice is noticeable in the text, rather than making the reader feel as if the oral history narrator is sharing his/her story
Organization, spelling, and grammar (___/10 points)	Story is well organized; writing is free of grammatical and spelling errors	Has many interesting points, but is poorly organized or weakly written; has some grammatical or spelling errors	Has many grammatical or spelling errors; it's difficult to understand the "so what" of the labor portrait
Final numerical score:		**Letter grade:**	

In this series of assignments, Professor Louise Robbins and Professor Michael Edmonds lead students new to Library and Information Studies through a series of field research and critical thinking tasks to help them understand the central questions and perspectives characterizing study in that field.

Professor Louise Robbins
Professor Michael Edmonds
Library and Information Studies

SEQUENCED ASSIGNMENTS TO INTRODUCE STUDENTS TO A FIELD OF STUDY

Assignment 1: Book Review
Due September 22

First, read the instructions that *Library Journal* gives to its reviewers.

Then, select any one of the following required books:
1. Fadiman. The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down
2. McAuliffe. Bloodland: A Family Story of Oil, Greed and Murder on the Osage Reservation or The Deaths of Sybil Bolton
3. Woodson. I Hadn't Meant to Tell You This
4. Robbins. The Dismissal of Miss Ruth Brown

Then, as demanded by *LJ,* provide "within 175-200 words... a brief statement of the thesis or description of the contents, a critical appraisal of both substance and execution, and an indication of the book's value for library collections. Our audience [that's me...] expects an *LJ* review to be based on a thorough, careful reading and on informed judgment." After writing the review, answer the following questions in no more than three sentences each:

1. What did you find most frustrating about this exercise?

2. What effect would that, and similar limitations, have on the content and quality of reviews in *Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Kirkus*, and other major reviewing journals?

3. Can librarians successfully rely on such tools to select books for their collections? Argue yes or no, but provide your reason.

4. What might librarians do to remedy this situation?

Submit your assignment before midnight on 9/22 by placing it the dropbox in our Learn@UW site.

Assignment 2: Professional Literature
Due October 13

Visit the SLIS library and examine the last two years of a journal whose title is marked below. As you do so, make notes on the questions that follow. You will use your notes to contribute to an online discussion in small groups no later than 10/13. We will also discuss the literature in class on 10/20.

1. Who publishes it? What sorts of people appear to write for it? Is it peer reviewed? What sorts of people are its intended audience? What niche, if any, does it occupy?

2. What bibliographic indexes cover it?

3. How does it compare to a professional journal in your undergraduate discipline or in another career you've had? (*Journal of American History*, *Foreign Affairs*, *American Studies*, *Journal of Modern Literature*, etc.)

4. How can you imagine using it during your SLIS or professional career?

Place your notes with the title of your journal in your dropbox no later than midnight on 10/13.

Assignment 3: Collection Development
Due November 16

Your boss at Medium Sized Public Library has decided that current events require you to expand the library's collection of books on Islam, globalization of the economy, and civil liberties in the U.S.

Choose ONE of those topics and identify $500 worth of materials currently in print that you would buy in order to give your patrons a better grasp of that subject. You may add books, journals, videos, CDs, database subscriptions, or other objects to the collection, as well as adding websites to the library's online information clearinghouse. Your patrons are mostly curious lay people with high school educations, though there are some children, a large number of young adults, and some college graduates to consider as well.

Provide me a bibliography showing the authors, titles, publishers, and prices of materials you would select. Their total cost should be $475-$525. Then answer the following questions in not more than three sentences each:

1. How did you discover information on your topic? How did you learn what was available to add to your library? Briefly describe your overall strategy.

2. What specific sources did you consult to make your choices? Bookstores? Review journals? Web sites? Campus experts? Mass media? List all these sources by name.

3. What do you see as the greatest flaws, dangers, or disadvantages in this process? How might a good librarian overcome them?

Put your assignment in your dropbox no later than midnight 11/16 and be prepared to discuss it in class the next day.

Assignment 4: "Geographies of Information"
Due December 1

It is impossible not to be aware that the United States has an advantaged position when it comes to information access. Part of this advantage is rooted in technology and material wealth; part of it is rooted in the political and economic systems. Even within the U.S., however, there are differentials in information access depending on where you live and your economic status. Choose a country you know little about and spend time finding information about its "Geographies of Information."

See what you can find out about your country's
- telecommunication system
- newspapers
- internet access and number of users
- libraries
- publishers
- transportation system
- literacy levels and access to education

Create a brief (no more than two-page) synopsis of what you have found. You can use an atlas style for this assignment, with bullet-points and tables, charts, or maps if you like.

I would suggest using some of the following resources, in addition to almanacs and atlases, if they are helpful:
- http://memorial.library.wisc.edu/globalinfo.htm
- *The Europa World Yearbook* located in the College Library Reference Collection.
- Websites related to your country.
- The International Federation of Library Associations and Agencies (IFLA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Websites.

Place your paper in your dropbox no later than midnight on December 1, but be prepared to discuss it in class that day.

Professor Betty Kramer provides her Masters in Social Work students with a contract to help scaffold their choices for the writing projects they will complete throughout the course of the semester.

Professor Betty Kramer
Social Work 821

LEARNING CONTRACT FOR SEMESTER WRITING PROJECTS IN A GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK COURSE

Due Tuesday February 4

Checklist:

- Select which assignments you would like to complete that total 75 points. This will include at least one major assignment and one minor assignment, or three minor assignments.
- In the "DUE DATE" column, indicate the date that you will turn in the assignment, not to exceed the last day of class.
- Be sure to select a due date following the class date that covers the material.
- You may turn in your assignment before your due date, but NOT after. (i.e., if you want to be safe you could put the last day of class for all your assignments and then turn them in earlier if you would like)
- Type your name below to sign and then date the contract.
- Post the contract sheet only to Learn at UW by 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday Feb. 4

I _____________________________ agree to complete the following assignments by the dates indicated below.
(please print)

DUE DATE

A. **MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS**: (50 Points)

1. In-Class Interactive Workshop
2. Compare & Contrast 2 Treatment Approaches
3. Service Learning: Applied Intervention
4. Major Research Paper

B. **MINOR ASSIGNMENTS:** (25 Points Each)

1. Interview Older Adult
2. Book Review & Brief Presentation
3. Group Process Observation & Analysis (1-2 sessions)
4. Brief Research Paper

Student Signature **Date:**

Note: For examples of many of the assignments listed in the learning contract above, see Section 4: Designing Effective Assignments, Section 7: Conferencing and Peer Review, and Section 8: Writing in Community-Based Learning

In this series of assignments, Professor Morris Young offers students an opportunity to draft a final written project over time and present the project in an oral form.

Professor Morris Young
Asian American Studies

SEQUENCING ASSIGNMENTS FOR A FINAL PROJECT AND PRESENTATION IN ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Asian/Pacific Islander American Heritage Month Project
(Proposal Due: **March 22**; 1st Draft Due: **April 5**; Final Project Due: **May 5**)

Over the last month of class we will begin to transform the reading and discussion we've been having about Asian American literature and culture into programming for APIA Heritage Month. One reason to do so is to deepen your understanding of the issues we have been studying. Another reason to do so is to make Asian American literature and culture more visible to the larger community which may have little awareness of Asian Americans as a group. I have scheduled 3 class periods for presentations. You will develop an activity or lesson plan depending on what you want to do and what you want to accomplish. You will be responsible for making a presentation on the date you sign-up for.

I think the best way to decide what you want to do is to organize your presentation around an idea or issue that you want to focus on that has been expressed in the literature we have been reading. This could be an issue such as "racism experienced by Asian Americans" or a specific event/experience like "Japanese American internment camps" or exploration of particular groups (especially those groups who are less familiar or have not been covered as much in class).

You can then determine what the best approach/medium is for both communicating information and facilitating discussion about the idea/issue. Activities or lessons can range from planning displays about Asian American culture, bringing in a speaker, planning an Asian American film/video series, designing and teaching lessons about selected Asian American issues or texts, planning a reading of Asian American literature, designing an informational website, or other activities that you think are appropriate and useful in celebrating APA Heritage Month.

Since this is a project for a literature class, you need to use a literary text we've examined in class. You may use additional texts or materials but you must develop your project out of some issue/question/idea that was sparked by something read for class. The goal of this project is to use literature to teach a wider audience about an issue you find interesting/important.

Writing Fellows Consultation: You will also be required to meet with a Writing Fellow who has been assigned to our class. A Writing Fellow consultation will provide you with the opportunity to receive feedback on your written work for this project at the draft stage. You will also have the opportunity to incorporate feedback that you receive during your poster presentation into the **final version of your project which is due on May 5**.

<u>The final project includes the following:</u>

1. A **brief proposal (250-300 words)** describing your topic and general ideas about how you will approach this final project. Key to this proposal and project is to make a connection to the literature we've read. How does the literature express or address the issue/topic you are discussing? **Due March 22.**

2. A **first draft of the written project (3-5 pp.)** that includes an **introduction** and an **activity/lesson plan** (see below). **This first draft will be reviewed and commented on by a Writing Fellow who will also arrange a consultation with you**. **Due April 5.**

3. A **presentation**, which will be done as "poster" sessions. To allow you to revise and incorporate feedback from class, your **final version of the activity/lesson is due on May 5**—keep in mind that this provides students who present earlier with more time to revise.

4. A **final draft of the written project (5-10 pp. not including other material such as sample handouts, illustrations/graphics, etc.)**. Your final written project should include the following sections:

   a. An **introduction** that describes the subject and its context for your project. This is where you describe the particular issue, event, figure, etc. that you are examining and provide background information about this subject whether historical, social, political, or other contexts that are important to your discussion.
   b. An **activity/lesson plan**. In the "lesson plan" you should describe what your goals are and what activities you are going to do to achieve those goals. The more detailed the better. Discuss what materials you are using (e.g., which literature, video, etc.). If you are planning a display or some other type of activity, you should take into account both

logistics as well as content. That is, what is the subject and content of your activity and how do you want to accomplish this activity? In this section make sure you provide the following:

Purpose: Describe why you are doing this particular activity and why you think this is an appropriate activity. Based on what we've read and discussed in class, provide some background and context for this particular activity. For example, what is some of the important information that you want to communicate? Why is this important?

Goal: Think about your goals for this activity. What do you want to accomplish by doing this activity? If you're talking with a group, what do you want them to get out of this activity? If you're preparing an exhibit, what do you want people who view this exhibit to understand? In all cases, what do you want people to learn? What do you want them to take away after the activity?

Methods: Describe how you're going to go about doing this activity. Think of this as a lesson plan. You'll need to think about who your audience is, what you want them to learn, and how to make this activity effective. For example, is a lecture going to be the best way to comrnunicate information? Does this depend on age group? How do you talk about Japanese American internment to middle-school kids? To mostly white students in the Midwest? What kinds of activities can you do to help the people come to some awareness on their own? How do you talk about these kinds of issues without putting people off? Without reducing and simplifying the real pain and injustice of certain experiences? Without reinforcing already existing stereotypes?

c. Finally, you should write an **analysis and reflection**. Your **analysis** should focus on the content of your project; that is, think about this particular Asian American issue/subject and the questions it raises for you. For the **reflection** think about whether your lesson was successful? Why did it or didn't it work? What would you do differently? What do you think others got out of the activity? Think about the semester as a whole. How has this activity worked to broaden your understanding of the issues in Asian American culture?

Read how Professor Helen Blackwell and her colleagues revised Chem 346, one of the Chemistry Department's staple undergraduate courses, to provide undergraduate students with advanced training in chemistry research. The process is an excellent model for any instructor revising a course.

Kate Vieira
Writing Across the Curriculum

SEQUENCING WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN INTERMEDIATE ORGANIC CHEMISTRY

How does one go about updating a curricular classic? And what role do writing assignments play? These are the questions we asked Assistant Professor Helen Blackwell, recent winner of a prestigious university teaching award. We were interested in how she and colleagues reinvented the Intermediate Organic Chemistry Laboratory (Chemistry 346). This course, an upper-level undergraduate elective, has been one of the Chemistry Department's staple undergraduate courses for decades. The goal of the reinvented course? To provide advanced training in chemistry research to undergraduates.

To reach this goal, the new version of the course incorporates the very latest lab techniques in a field that is evolving rapidly. In addition, students learn how to write about their findings much like professional researchers. As Professor Blackwell puts it, "There are times when 50% of a chemistry researcher's job is dedicated to writing. Thus, learning how to write effectively is crucial."

Just as writing is an important professional activity, Blackwell reports that it also helps students learn. "If you don't understand a concept well, it's hard to write about it," she points out. "The process of writing forces you to understand what you are doing and understand it in a broader context. For a student and a teacher, what could be better than that?"

Thus a new, improved version of Chemistry 346 was born. And now, to the delight of many chemistry students, it also fulfills the University's Communication-B requirement.

The Nuts and Bolts
This new version of Chem 346 includes a number of opportunities for students to hone their communication skills. In the first half of the semester, students write three lab reports based on experiments connected to Nobel-prize-winning chemistry research in various areas. For example, students conduct labs on the synthesis of antibiotics (Paul Ehrlich, Nobel 1908), natural products isolation and total synthesis (George Wittig, Nobel 1979), and the development of asymmetric chemical reactions (Sharpless, Knowles, and Noyori, Nobel 2001).

In the second half of the semester, students are assigned to graduate research groups in the Chemistry Department and work with graduate-student and post-doctoral mentors on ongoing projects. From these projects, students write up a two-page "extended abstract" including the following sections: introduction, results, graphic representation of findings, significance, and annotated bibliography. This format is modeled after abstract formats required by certain scientific journals.

Finally, students present their research results in a poster format during a class poster session during the last week of the course. The poster session allows students to practice scientific presentation skills.

In order to teach scientific writing, Professor Blackwell follows some of the latest theories in writing-across-the-curriculum research. In accordance with these theories, she uses four main strategies.

1) Repeating a genre several times over the semester.

Students write three lab reports over the course of the semester. While the experiments that students report about differ, the genre remains constant. This consistency gives students a chance to practice and improve from one assignment to the next.

2) Incorporating peer review.

Blackwell reports that peer review has been one of the most popular aspects of this course and has helped students' writing improve significantly. She models the in-class peer-review process on the kind of peer review conducted by scientific journals. At the outset, students focus primarily on the science during the review process. As students improve on the science of their lab reports, their arguments become more cogent, which helps improve their writing. While Blackwell requires peer review only for the first lab report, many students find it so useful that they voluntarily participate in peer review for the remainder of the semester.

3) Teaching about writing in class.

Blackwell has found a number of different ways to give students direct instruction about the kind of writing she wants them to produce. For example, one of the first things students do in the course is to read a “short guide to scientific writing,” which Blackwell and her colleagues have put together. This guide addresses issues such as engaging readers, learning the conventions of scientific writing, and building an argument.

Soon afterward, Blackwell devotes a lecture to dissecting a badly written lab report. This activity helps students to understand more precisely what belongs (and what doesn’t!) in this form of writing.

Finally, when students write extended scientific abstracts based on their original experiments, they are provided with a whole book of sample scientific abstracts. This variety of sample abstracts lets students immerse themselves in the genre. They end up better understanding what is expected of a scientific abstract and how to write a successful one themselves.

4) Conducting regular formative assessments.

Blackwell and colleagues elicited feedback from students throughout the course using a free online assessment model called SALG, Student Assessment of Learning Gains. They were able to elicit ongoing feedback about how various aspects of the course were working (peer review, for example). This feedback allowed them to modify the course to meet student needs as the semester progressed—as opposed to waiting to learn what students thought only after the semester had already ended. How did they motivate students to take these assessments seriously? They made completion of the online surveys worth 5% of students’ grades.

What, overall, did such assessment show? That 100% of students found their instruction in scientific writing valuable. Through their hard work and ingenuity, chemistry faculty have created a model for a first-rate writing-intensive, experimental science course.

Reprinted from *Time to Write*, the newsletter of the L&S Program in Writing Across the Curriculum, UW-Madison, Vol. 11, No. 2. Spring 2008.

In this sequence of assignments for an advanced course in art history, Professor Ann Martin helps students practice writing in the genres that are valued within museum or digital exhibitions.

Professor Ann Smart Martin
Department of Art History

A SEQUENCE OF SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN ART HISTORY 601

Assignment #1: Write a 150-word analysis that makes your personal object interesting and informative to someone else (your roommate, friend, partner, or whatever disinterested person you can think of).

Student example:

Ball Brothers
New York, United Sates
1880

The molded glass Ball Jar most known for its ability to can and preserve food was founded by the five Ball Brothers in 1880. The rarity of the Ball Jar can be recognized by its color and shape. Today you might find them in a range of colors such as red or purple but the original aqua blue and green were made to block light from spoiling the contents inside. The mason jar screw thread top will seal and vacuum its content, keeping your cherry jam or heirloom tomato sauce preserved throughout the winter. Current day canning and preserving practices may not be as common today due to modern refrigeration but the Ball Jar continues to adapt in the modern age. Florists use them as center pieces at wedding receptions while mixologists create trendy cocktails served in a Ball Jar.

Assignment #2: Writing short object labels for catalog (below, with example)

Review all the readings about writing good labels. In particular, think about the writings from the *Victoria and Albert Museum* readings that is found on class site and summarized below. Aim for 100-150 words.

- Write for your audience
- Stick to the text hierarchy and word count
- Organize your information
- Engage with the object
- Admit uncertainty

Assignment #3 (Final assignment): Write an approximately 500-page explication of selected objects for the catalog. Each catalog section would hence have one larger object story.

Take a look at the e-book (below link) and see if there is anything useful here both writing parts are included there.

Link:
https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/driftless/chapter/shoes/

DESIGNING EFFECTIVE ASSIGNMENTS

This resource breaks down key elements of a successful writing assignment and explains why and how these elements are effective.

Kathleen Daly
Writing Across the Curriculum

THE ANATOMY OF A WELL-DESIGNED WRITING ASSIGNMENT

This sourcebook is full of successful writing assignments from a wide range of disciplines, courses, and pedagogical approaches. However, it's not always easy to see how you can adapt writing assignments that deal with content that is unfamiliar or unrelated to your course. To help you make better use of the variety of writing and speaking assignments found in the sourcebook, we have annotated a successful writing assignment that identifies key terms to help you analyze different writing and speaking assignments and learn to understand assignments from disciplines outside of your own.

This writing assignment below comes from Professor Stephen Young's International Studies course. We have broken down some key characteristics that make this writing assignment successful and have included brief explanations of why and how these characteristics are useful.

We would be happy to consult with you about how to customize an assignment or pedagogical strategy to fit your course!

Professor Stephen Young
International Studies 402

THE WORLD BANK LETTER

Overview:
The World Bank is a very important institution when it comes to measuring and addressing poverty around the globe. Every year the Bank updates its estimates of how many people live below its poverty thresholds of $2 and $1.25 a day. Yet, many scholars have argued that this measure reflects a rather arbitrary conceptualization of poverty. You are going to write a 1200 word [3-4 pages double-spaced] letter to the President and Governors of the World Bank in which you address some of the shortcomings of their poverty measures and advocate for a different approach. What that alternative looks like is up to you but be sure to justify your decision.

Learning Outcomes:
Students (i) learn how to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different ways of conceptualizing and measuring poverty and (ii) improve their ability to communicate ideas in a clear, concise fashion.

Instructions
- Write the date at the top of the page and open your letter by formally addressing the WB President and Governors.
- In the opening paragraph, explain the purpose of the letter. Then, in 1-2 paragraphs, outline what you think is problematic about the way that the WB measures poverty.
- Drawing on readings and other material covered in class, construct an alternative way of conceptualizing and measuring poverty. You can draw on data and develop your arguments by using examples and material from other theorists. You should acknowledge your sources where appropriate [e.g. "according to Branko Milanovic", or "the WB's own data from 2011 suggests that…"]. However, you do not need to provide a bibliography. Also, remember to try and keep the tone of the writing in tune with a letter, rather than an academic essay.

Central Task
Professor Young identifies the central task of the assignment and repeats it throughout the assignment description to reinforce key learning goals.

Learning Goals
The "Learning Outcomes" section explicitly highlights the key goals of the assignment, which helps students understand why this assignment is relevant to the course while also giving a framework for how their work will be evaluated.

Explanation of Genre
These kinds of guidelines about structure/organization are important when students are relatively inexperienced writing in a particular genre.

Models and Samples
Providing models helps students meet assignment expectations. By showing a sample of an appropriate in-text citation, Young is helping students visualize responsibly integrated sources. Instructors can also discuss models in class and/or to provide other samples of both successful and unsuccessful writing.

- Use the final paragraph to reiterate your main points and then formally sign-off.

Grading:
In this assignment, we will be looking for evidence that you understand that knowledge about "poverty" is always open to contestation. We are trying to assess whether you can also develop your own ideas about how poverty should be conceptualized and measured drawing from course materials. We also want to see if you can communicate your ideas clearly and concisely in the form of a letter.

Grading Rubric for World Bank Letter

Criteria	Points	Comments
A. Content and argument /60		
The author conveys a general appreciation that "poverty" can be conceptualized and measured in different ways	/20	
The author offers a specific critique (or defense) of the way that the World Bank conceptualizes and measures poverty	/20	
The author develops their own case for conceptualizing and measuring poverty in a particular way	/20	

B. Structure and Organization /20	Points	Comments
An introduction sets out the purpose of the letter	/5	
A concluding paragraph recapitulates the most important points	/5	
The letter is clearly organized and flows well from one section to next	/10	
C. Style and Format /20		
The letter is correctly formatted	/5	
The letter contains no spelling or grammar mistakes	/5	
The tone and language of the letter are appropriate for the audience	/10	
Total	: /100	

Explanation of Evaluation Criteria
The "Grading" section explains the evaluation process. This brief overview of the grading process helps students understand how their papers will be evaluated and provides a clear explanation of the priorities for this assignment. It is important that your evaluation criteria align with the goals of your assignment.

Rubric
This rubric breaks down the evaluation criteria into two sections: "Content and Argument" and "Structure and Organization." The rubric reflects the goals of the assignment, beginning with the big-picture items and gradually moving into the smaller-scale requirements.

Other possible elements of an assignment might include:
- Instructions for the drafting process with key deadlines
- Peer review instructions
- Invitations to talk to the instructor about the assignment.

Here are some suggestions to keep in mind as you write your assignment handouts, as well as suggestions for other activities that prepare students to write.

TIPS FOR WRITING AN ASSIGNMENT AND TEACHING IT TO STUDENTS

Good writing assignments encourage students' engagement with course material, promote critical thinking, and help students learn characteristic ways of asking questions, analyzing data, and making arguments in your discipline. No matter what type of writing you assign, how you present the assignments to your students can affect their success.

1. Be clear about your pedagogical goals and design assignments to meet those goals.

- Continually share your pedagogical goals for the course and for writing assignments with students.
- Sequence writing assignments to build on developing writing skills by progressing from easier to more difficult kinds of writing and thinking (e.g., move from summaries to arguments, from narrow questions to more complex problems).

2. Put the assignment in writing, making sure to explain…

- The writing task (what you want them to do)
- The student writer's role
- Audience
- Format (length, resources to be used, manuscript details, etc.)
- Expectations for process (draft dates, peer review workshops, revision dates)
- Criteria for evaluation

3. Discuss the assignment in class.

- Discuss how to read and interpret writing assignments.
- Ask students how they plan to approach the assignment to clarify any misinterpretations they may have and to help them get started on the right track.
- Allow time for student questions.
- Model successful sample papers.
- Do a "norming" session by asking students to evaluate a variety of sample essays (or parts of essays) and explain why the good papers were successful.
- Try writing the assignment yourself and share your efforts with your students.

4. Provide opportunities for students to approach writing as a process.

- Provide students with multiple opportunities for feedback and revision with proposal and draft due dates.
- Have students work in peer review groups together, presenting their work and asking each other questions.
- Hold brief individual conferences in your office to talk about plans or drafts.
- Have students give class presentations on their work.

5. When evaluating their work, respond to student writers in constructive ways that promote learning.

- Respond to writers, not papers.
- Resist the urge to comment on everything, which will overwhelm students.
- Use written or oral feedback to set a few specific goals for student improvement.
- Respond to early drafts; evaluate final drafts.
- Ask students to hand in early drafts and your comments with their final drafts so you can respond directly to their revisions (and spend less time responding to final versions).
- Have students turn in self-evaluating cover sheets or cover letters with their papers to encourage self-reflection and to guide your feedback.
- Consider giving global or models feedback to short assignment

As you plan assignments for your course, this table can help you choose types of writing that best match your learning goals.

MATCHING WRITING ASSIGNMENTS TO LEARNING GOALS

	This Kind of Assignment . . .	Helps Students Learn to . . .
1.	**freewriting**	▪ generate ideas by writing ▪ experiment freely with ideas and take intellectual risks ▪ discover their thoughts about and reactions to course content ▪ prepare to participate in a discussion ▪ become more comfortable writing ▪ know themselves better as writers
2.	**discussion points**	▪ read carefully and critically ▪ prepare to participate in a discussion
3.	**journal or learning log**	▪ read carefully and critically ▪ respond personally to readings ▪ differentiate between the ideas in a reading and students' own ideas about that topic ▪ prepare to write more formal papers about readings ▪ prepare to participate in a discussion
4.	**microtheme**	▪ see to the heart of an issue ▪ concentrate on a single, focused issue ▪ select only the most important points to make ▪ be concise ▪ prepare to participate in a discussion
5.	**summary, précis, brief**	▪ read or listen carefully and critically ▪ select the most important points in a reading ▪ present points succinctly ▪ prepare to participate in a discussion
6.	**literature review**	▪ summarize complex readings ▪ compare and synthesize different research and arguments ▪ understand the state of knowledge on a particular topic ▪ think critically about published research ▪ find and evaluate published research ▪ discover openings for new research
7.	**book (or article) review**	▪ read critically and carefully ▪ summarize a book's content ▪ analyze a book's structure and method ▪ evaluate a book's success ▪ select evidence to support an evaluation

	This Kind of Assignment . . .	Helps Students Learn to . . .
8.	**argument paper, position paper**	▪ identify an arguable issue ▪ think critically about a course-related issue ▪ think independently ▪ develop an arguable position ▪ find and present supporting evidence ▪ acknowledge and respond to opposing arguments ▪ write persuasively
9.	**experimental or lab report**	▪ think and write like a scientist ▪ identify the purpose of an experiment ▪ review relevant literature ▪ describe methods accurately ▪ organize results logically ▪ discuss the significance of results ▪ identify needs for further research
10.	**proposal, prospectus for research**	▪ identify questions that are worth researching and that are manageable within the scope of the course ▪ ask good questions ▪ see research as a process ▪ develop a plan for research ▪ develop a methodology for research ▪ ask for help in the process of conducting research ▪ modify research plans based on the instructor's response
11.	**annotated bibliography**	▪ find and select relevant books and articles ▪ summarize the contents of books and articles concisely ▪ determine the purpose that particular sources will serve in a research paper ▪ prepare reference lists in appropriate format
12.	**theory paper**	▪ generalize from data ▪ build models ▪ examine (compare and contrast, critique, synthesize) accepted practices in a discipline
13.	**parody of a common genre in your discipline**	▪ demonstrate knowledge of a common genre ▪ test limits of a genre and of accepted practices in a discipline ▪ have fun with writing

The assignments below are generally short, informal, perhaps ungraded writing assignments that instructors might consider adapting to their classes. Students often appreciate the opportunity to explore their thoughts on paper in a way that relieves the pressure of a longer, more formal writing assignment.

Brad Hughes, Martin Nystrand, Paige Byam, and Tom Curtis
English

INFORMAL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

The Question Box

Having students write anonymous questions about the content of lectures encourages them to think more critically about what they are hearing. Students can be asked to write these questions before, during, and after lectures. They can deposit their questions in a cardboard box near the exit of the lecture hall. During subsequent classes, the lecturer actually incorporates these student questions and insights into the presentation material, usually by reproducing the remarks on transparencies and projecting them directly to the class for comment and response.

Anticipatory Writing or Freewriting

Instructors can ask students to write informally (or to engage in a "freewrite") about a particular course topic before they read, hear a lecture, or participate in a discussion about it. Such anticipatory writing helps students connect their previous knowledge with new information and prepares them for fuller participation in reading, lecture, or discussion.

- EXAMPLE (from a sociology course on criminal justice, before lectures about police corruption): "List the factors you can think of that lead to police corruption. How do you think those reasons might vary from urban to non-urban police forces?"

Microthemes or Minute Papers

Brief essays, written in class or as homework, ranging from a 3 x 5 card to a page in length. This kind of assignment is designed to encourage students to reflect on what they're learning, to give feedback to instructors, and to promote specific cognitive skills, such as summarizing, argument, analysis, problem solving, or hypothesizing from data. Some benefits: students must learn to see right to the heart of an issue, to select only major points; instructors can emphasize a particular issue or type of thinking, can learn what students understand and what they don't, and can read the microthemes quickly.

- EXAMPLE (from any course): To be written quickly and submitted at the end of the class—"What was the most important thing that you learned today?" "What were the main points of today's lecture?" "What questions remain uppermost in your mind?" Begin the next class meeting by reading aloud selected microthemes.

- EXAMPLE (from a course in gender and the professions): "You are a writer for a major advertising firm. You have been asked to design two written advertisements for a vacation in England, one of which will attract men (Esquire) and the other to appeal to women (Ms.). You think, however, that two ads are unnecessary. Write a memo to your boss and explain why."

- EXAMPLE (to promote specific kinds of thinking in any course): Provide students with a thesis that they then have to support in the microtheme with specifics. From a finance course: "Choose one of the following propositions and defend it in two pages: The price earnings ratio of a stock does/does not reflect the rate or return that investors in that stock will achieve." Or provide students with specifics that they must draw a conclusion from. Or ask students to apply a theory to a new set of facts. Or ask students to explain (perhaps in outline form) a process for solving a problem.

- EXAMPLE (from a course in physiology): "Some organs of the body are functionally unique single structures (e.g., one heart, one spleen). Others are found as functionally redundant pairs (two kidneys, two lungs). Explain how the human brain might be cited as an illustration of both kinds of anatomical structure."

Response Papers

These are one-, two-, or three-page exploratory "think pieces" requiring students to react to some aspect of an article or book or lecture. Typically the instructor asks students to take an idea that has come up in class lecture or discussion or in readings and develop it more fully. These pieces of writing should be treated as exploratory drafts; students might pick 2 or 3 such texts to revise and submit for grading at the end of the term. They will be most effective if instructors assign or allow students to choose a persona to adopt, a particular situation to respond to, an audience to address, a particular purpose to fulfill. To set this up, instructors should assign students a professional identity, a situation, and even a rhetorical form (letter, memo, etc.).

- EXAMPLE (from Professor Lee Hansen's Econ. 450 class): "Imagine that you are serving as the principal economic adviser to Secretary of Labor Brock who asks you for a two-page analysis of Reissman's proposal (attached) for a legislated four-day, 32-hour week; this would entail amending the Fair Labor Standards Act. Explain the likely effects of such legislation on measured employment and unemployment, total hours worked, the labor cost index, and earnings."

Letters to Authors

A personal response to an assigned reading in the form of a letter. The informal style and imagined possibility of letters often makes them easier to write than essays.

- EXAMPLE: "Pick an author with whom you disagree or whom you admire. Write a letter to this person expressing your views."

Persona Pieces

A short text in which a student role plays a particular figure, perhaps in the form of a journal entry or a letter.

- EXAMPLE: "Imagine that you are William Buckley and you are getting ready to debate Noam Chomsky on American foreign policy in Central America. Write down the points you intend to make in your debate. In order to anticipate Chomsky's own arguments and be prepared, also write down what you expect to be his main points and how you will respond."

Editorials

Argumentative and persuasive texts geared to the classroom community or to a broader group.

- EXAMPLE (from a philosophy course): "Write an editorial for The Progressive or The National Review in which you support or argue against parents' and doctors' use of sophisticated biomedical techniques to detect potential birth defects in fetuses."

Journals

Journals (special notebooks in which students write regularly) provide students with time and a requirement to think about course material and to engage in an ongoing written dialogue with their instructors. As Toby Fulwiler explains, journals can help individualize learning and encourage "writers to become conscious, through language, of what is happening to them, both personally and academically." Students can use journals to

- record thoughts, insights, and impressions about course material
- ask questions and speculate; clarify, modify, and extend ideas
- respond to reading, lectures, or instructor's questions
- begin thinking about ideas that can later be developed into more formal papers
- discover connections between course materials; prepare for exams, class discussion, or course papers
- gain fluency in writing.

Journals are different from other kinds of assignments in the freedom they provide for thinking that isn't directly evaluated by the professor; they can provide a place for personal responses and for experimentation. Because journals are personal and because instructors need to make students feel comfortable being tentative and taking the kinds of risks that journals offer, it's important to allow students leeway in the kinds of entries that they choose to write. Some students respond well to using a journal to sponsor their own topics in an unstructured way, while others seem to need more specific guidelines for journal writing.

Even though instructors do not usually grade journals for content or expression, they should, however, expect students to write regularly and thoughtfully in their journals. Part of a discussion or participation grade or a percentage of a student's overall grade is often based on the effort exhibited in regularly writing in the journal. (Many instructors give their students A's for a journal-keeping requirement if students regularly write in it and "No Credit" if they don't.) One way to stress the importance of journals is to integrate them with other class activities. For example, journals can be used as a place for students to write at the beginning or end of class; instructors can periodically ask students to read entries aloud in class as a way to open up discussion. Students can also be asked to develop formal papers out of promising journal entries. And because journal writing takes place over an extended period of time and emphasizes developing thinking, some instructors have students review and write an introduction to their journals as a culminating assignment.

To make students take a journal assignment seriously and to encourage good thinking, instructors must read and respond to the journals, especially early in the semester. To keep the reading load manageable, instructors often

- skim journals to check on progress
- collect journals on a rotating basis
- respond briefly to selected entries that appear interesting or that students have selected for response; responses can take the form of a personal comment or a question to prompt further thought.

Double-Entry Learning Logs

These are special journals in which students respond to the material they read for class, on the one hand, and “talk with the teacher about the readings,” on the other. In these logs, students summarize key information (rather than just highlight key passages in the books or articles themselves) and respond to the reading—raising questions, drawing parallels, voicing objections, confessing confusion. If instructors respond to these logs, they can focus and direct students, point our ideas for fuller treatment in formal papers, suggest other reading, answer questions, challenge ideas. (Students can use a variation of this technique as they take class notes: in the right-hand column they can summarize, respond to, or question the detailed notes in the left column.) A word of caution, however: journals and learning logs are time-consuming for both instructors and students, and if instructors assign them, they may have to adjust the amount of reading as they assign or else use the logs for only certain readings.

Class Minutes

Summary of the class lecture or discussion, prepared by a student selected as secretary-for-the-day; duplicated for all class members, presented, and discussed briefly at the beginning of the next class.

Course Dictionaries

Glossary of key terms in a course, with students producing definitions, examples, illustrations, maps, diagrams, etc. During the first part of a course, students identify main terms and major concepts; during the second part, students collaboratively compile the course dictionary. The audience for the dictionary is students who will take the course in future semesters.

Text Completion

Students read half a story, chapter, book, or experiment, or a partial data set, and then predict the rest and justify their conclusions.

Professor Karen Ryker and Professor Michael Shank use weekly writing assignments to encourage student engagement and to stimulate class discussions. Here are two samples of these assignments.

Professor Karen Ryker
Theatre and Drama 541

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS IN THEATRE AND DRAMA AND HISTORY OF SCIENCE

The Journal
In your journal, you can set down your daily response to the textbook, to exercises and classwork, and to your rehearsals. It should record specific, thoughtful analysis of information and methods and how they improve your technique. Entries can be in the form of a (well-) written conversation between you and me: it should be a forum for your ideas about performing and a vehicle for my response to your thoughts and questions about performing Shakespeare. It can provide you with a means to assimilate the material and to work up a personal process for acting Shakespeare. (The journal could easily be the groundwork for your final paper.) Number of entries: at least 3 brief entries per week.

For responses to both READING ASSIGNMENTS and LAB WORK, it will be useful to note:

- What “sparks” you, what stimulates you to connect with the words
- What exercises/ideas feed you as a performer (register your responses)
- What works on the page but not when you attempt to perform it (and vice versa)
- Where something requires further explanation
- Did anything unexpected come up? Useful? Not useful?

Additionally, your journal should include responses to at least two readings of authors other than Berry, Linklater, or Shakespeare himself. When referring to a text, please cite specific page numbers. I will collect and respond to the journals three times during the semester (dates listed on syllabus).

Considerations in evaluating journals:

- Individual thoughtful responses to the work, or to the textbook, or to the language of your character/scene, or to class exercises, or to rehearsals, or to outside readings, or to First Text considerations
- Clarity of thought, recognition of application to your own acting process
- Does it generate ideas, insights or applications significant enough to elicit a response from others?
- Clarity in writing style

Professor Michael Shank
History of Science 180

The Weekly One-Pager
The purposes of this assignment are several:

- to make writing a more “natural” routine;
- to help you identify important themes and problems in the readings for that week.

Try to find in the primary source (and also the secondary material) of the day:

a) at least one major theme of the utopia that relates to the theme of the seminar and deserves discussion;
b) at least one significant issue that you find problematic in some fashion or other (troubling, puzzling, etc.)—the kind of issue with which the seminar group might help you grapple.

Note that (a) and (b) occasionally may be the same issue(s), or different facets thereof; usually they should not be, as there will be many themes from which to choose. Your forethought on these issues will stimulate our discussions when you bring your issues to the group.

Approximately half the page should be in expository prose (good sentences; some thematic development). The remainder may be in outline form (if you have a lot of insight in any particular week), but it must be sufficiently clear to communicate to another mind (namely mine).

This assignment presupposes that you will be taking notes on your readings, and that you will select from your jottings the most interesting issues. Your task is, therefore, in part an editorial one: to choose a few among many issues that, in your view, warrant attention.

I insist on the written presentation of these thoughts because the act of writing forces us both to clarify them and to organize them. As an extra bonus, new relationships between ideas frequently emerge from the process. I will collect these one-pagers in class, sometimes commenting on them, sometimes not. Good faith participation in the assignment will earn full credit.

Students practice analyzing the digital conversations surrounding a hashtag and making arguments about their analysis. Instructor Kathleen Daly supports students by providing carefully-designed evaluation criteria and guiding questions for their analysis.

Kathleen Daly
Communication Arts 478: Rhetoric and Power on the Internet

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #1 IN A COMM. ARTS COURSE

For this assignment, you will be conducting a rhetorical analysis of a hashtag as it moves across a particular social media platform. Your research will consist of tracing multiple iterations of a hashtag and critically assessing the various rhetorical situations to which this hashtag is applied. You will then write a short essay analyzing the rhetorical use and conversations around the hashtag.

Select a hashtag.

Before you can begin analyzing the discourse that circulates around a specific hashtag, you will need to identify several candidates and then choose the one that appears most promising. As you consider your options, try to follow the Goldilocks principle: the volume of tweets/pictures/posts shouldn't be too small or too big, but just right. For example, studying #SOTU would prove far too complicated given our timeframe, available tools, and expertise. On the other hand, #badgersdonteattidepods wouldn't give you nearly enough to work with in your analysis. The goal of this assignment is to analyze a social issue (grapple with issues) and questions of power, not merely to analyze any popular hashtag. So while the hashtag #FlyEaglesFly is culturally relevant and popular, it is not in the spirit of the assignment. **If you want to see if a particular hashtag meets the criteria before jumping into your analysis, Hashtagify.me is a hashtag analysis service that offers some basic statistical data regarding hashtag popularity over time, as well as a list of correlated hashtags. NOTE: THIS TOOL IS NOT TO BE USED IN YOUR ANALYSIS.**

Collect your data.

Once you have settled on a specific hashtag, begin monitoring the conversation surrounding that hashtag. Practically speaking, this means that you should be checking in several times a day and taking lots of notes about what you observe. In addition, you should save specific artifacts for use in your analysis by taking screenshots, and link these screenshots to your notes. Depending on which hashtag you choose, the amount of time you spend collecting data will vary; however, you should aim to analyze the hashtag over the course of a few days and <u>you should closely read at least **one hundred** tweets worth of content.</u>

You should not use a social media analytics platform to do your analysis. Your analysis should remain at the textual level, meaning that you should be analyzing individual tweets that use the hashtag, rather than analyzing metadata collected from every iteration of that hashtag.

Analyze your hashtag.

The following questions are meant to help guide your analysis. You **do not** need to answer all of these questions in your essay.

- What is the context surrounding this hashtag? What is happening to make people interested in this topic?
- What do the tweets using the hashtag have in common? Which tweets stand out and why?
- Which tweets are getting the most attention, replies, or favorites? Why?
- Who seems to be tweeting using this hashtag? What might they being trying to accomplish? What's their motivation to participate in this stream?
- Does the stream seem to get off track? How and why? Once it gets off track, how do others respond?
- What do you notice about how people are using language? How is the language use related to the topic or context?
- In what ways are corporations or organizations trying to capitalize on the stream? What effect does that have on the conversation?
- What, if any, outside sources are tweeters bringing into the stream? Which seem to most accepted by others? Which seem to be dismissed?
- Does the stream devolve into trolling, racism, sexism etc. at any point? What effect does that have on the conversation?

Analysis Tools.

- Play around with Twitter's native search functionality.
- If you are looking for a way to automatically capture all of the content using your chosen hashtag, Martin Hawksey's TAGS tool is excellent.

Write it up.

Your primary deliverable for this assignment is a short essay that introduces your hashtag, explains your methods for collecting and analyzing your data, interprets the data, and draws some conclusions about what you've observed over the course of this project. Aim for 800 words. If you go under or over this by a bit, that's fine, but please try to stay within 100 words of the limit. Each essay should include the following:

- A title (Headline)
- A thesis statement that makes a clear argument (Description)
- An introduction that provides context for understanding the hashtag (Text)
- Topic sentences that elaborate on your argument (Text)
- Example tweets/posts that support your topic sentences (Tweets dragged and dropped)
- Concepts from course readings that help you make or support your points (Text or Links)
- A conclusion that addresses what we can learn about the platform by studying the hashtag you chose

Writing Tools.

- You can use a social media curation platform like Wakelet to add tweets to your paper. However, you will need to submit your paper to canvas as a .pdf.
- The Writing Center has a number of resources that can help you as your write and revise your essay. While I definitely recommend visiting the Writing Center's website and checking out the range of resources available through the Writing Center's Writer's Handbook, I've pulled out a few guides that may be helpful for this particular project:
    - Thesis Statements v. Purpose Statements
    - Developing a Thesis Statement
    - Paragraphing
    - Writing Clearly and Concisely
    - Common Grammatical Errors

Evaluation criteria.

Your project will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Does your essay provide a succinct, yet informative introduction to the history and use of your chosen hashtag?
- Does your essay clearly explain your methods for collecting and interpreting your data?
- Does your essay critically analyze examples of the hashtag in use rather than merely describe and summarize them?
- Does your essay demonstrate how this analysis fits into broader course conversations (i.e. discussions about technological affordances, social networks, and digital literacies).

This three-part assignment asks students to think critically about privacy and data collection policies that affect their digital lives. Students create a log detailing their personal data footprint, analyze a digital platform and its data collection, and write a reflective essay on their analysis that connects to course topics and questions.

Kathleen Daly
Communication Arts 478: Rhetoric and Power on the Internet

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #3 IN A COMM. ARTS COURSE

The final short assignment asks you to analyze and interrogate the privacy and data collection policies and practices that inform our everyday digital lives. Specifically, you will explore data collection and use in two contexts: 1) your personal, everyday data footprint and 2) the data policies and practices of a particular online platform.

Part 1: Taking an Inventory of Your Personal Data Footprint
DUE THURSDAY, APRIL 26th
Terms-of-use policies that describe data collection and use are required by law, but these are lengthy and difficult to understand when read at all. Even more problematic is the fact that everyday users are often led to believe that the data they contribute is a vital and even beneficial component of the services they seek from a given platform. To complicate these shared assumptions about the data collection practices and policies that undergird our everyday digital lives, you will each keep a log of your digital movement/activity over the course of 12 hours. We will then work in class to unpack the various layers and types of data generated and collected during this time period.

Your internet use log may be submitted as a bulleted list, a spreadsheet, a table, or some other readable format. Because the volume of internet/internet-connected device use will vary from person to person, there is no set minimum or maximum requirement for how many entries you include in your log. However, you should strive to be as detailed and accurate as possible as your log your internet footprint.

Part 2: Analyzing a Platform's Data Collection Policies and Practices
Select a platform (Facebook, Google, Amazon, etc.) to analyze. Write an informal explanation (~300 words) of that platform's data collection policies and practices, addressing the following questions:

- What are the default settings of this system?
- What modifications to these settings are possible?
- How easy are these settings to manage?
- What are the terms of using this system?
- What are users agreeing to when they use this service?
- How are these terms (and any changes to them) communicated to users?

Part 3: Discussion
In an age when participation in so many life activities—including commerce, education, civic discourse, personal communication—require users to relinquish rights to their personal data and content, norms regarding responsible and ethical collection, management, circulation, and use of content and data need to change. Although internet users have some degree of agency in choosing among available settings and services, these choices are quite limited, and are ultimately controlled by the technology developers and providers. Therefore, the most pressing change that needs to happen is with our shared expectations for how such systems are designed, and what accountability we expect from software companies and service providers to offer ethical systems.

Based on your work from the first two parts of this assignment, write a short (~500 words) reflective essay that addresses the following questions: How might we, as a culture, hold software developers and companies responsible and accountable for designing systems that enact a different ethic, one that consider users' privacy and ownership rights? What broader structural issues would we need to address in order to enact ethical data practices? What systemic changes might you propose to help users become more responsible and active participants rather than passive consumers of platforms and services?

Evaluation Criteria
You will be evaluated for Part 1 and 2 of this assignment based on completion.

Part 3 evaluation criteria
- Does your discussion/reflection address key structural issues involved in the current standard for platforms' user agreements?
- Do you use examples to back up your claims about the issues underlying most user agreements?
- Does your essay propose systemic/structural changes that adequately respond to those issues?
- Do you provide clear explanation of how these systemic/structural changes would work to foster more ethical software/tech design and practices?

To help students think critically about readings and key themes, Professor Cook assigns journal entries and written responses in a music course. The journal prompts include focused questions that ask students to synthesize readings and draw connections among course topics, while the written response asks students to analyze a live music performance.

Professor Susan Cook
Music 416 (Survey of Music in the 20th Century)

JOURNAL ENTRIES AND LIVE MUSIC RESPONSE IN MUSIC 416

JOURNAL

Weekly informal written responses, 1-2 pages in length, double spaced, 12-point type, doc or docx format, are due each Tuesday by 8 am via our Canvas site. Sometimes I will provide writing prompts, other times you have the freedom to use this opportunity to reflect on the readings and listenings in preparation for class participation. *Graduate students should challenge themselves to synthesize readings and listening together and/or to draw connections among topics in order to demonstrate the accumulation of perspectives and insights, or to show how new material invites further reflection*. Journal responses will be graded high pass/pass/fail. You may take one week off from the assignment, or carry out all the weeks for extra credit. *No late assignments will be accepted.*

some journal prompt examples:

1. For your first journal entry, find a working definition of "historiography" and then browse texts in the ML197 section in the Mills Music Library. Identify two to compare. How are the texts alike or different? What's familiar or unfamiliar to you? Most importantly, how are they telling the story or writing the history of music in the 20th century?

2. Your second journal response continues our exploration of commercial recording and record labels. On reserve in the Mills Music Library are 5 commercially released LPs from two different labels popular c. 1940 through 1990: Blue Note and New World Records. I will assign you to one of the labels, and I encourage you to work together and share your ideas. Your written response, however, must be your own, although you may identify your collaborators.

   Blue Note: Thomas, Mike, Megan, Emma, Carl, Nick, Noah, Nicole, Alex, Ranveer

   New World: Courtney, David, Wade, Patrick, Talia, Anna, Lewis, Kenton, Christina, Jacob

   In your response reflect upon:

   - the "personality" or identity of the label. How does it present itself? What kinds of language is used? Who is the intended audience? What do you learn from this primary source?
   - reengage with the Filzen and Keightley articles. How are race and gender present—or absent? How has race shaped what's been recorded on the label?
   - your experience with the technology. Choose one of the LPs from your label (or be adventuresome and find another recording from the same label) to listen to and discuss your experience with this mode of recording technology.

3. Write a response to either the *Ancient Voices of Children* or *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* identifying key musical features and what issues the work raised for you as part of the listening experience. (It's perfectly fine to ask lots of questions rather than to try and provide answers.)

   OR

   Write a response to the assigned reading in which you summarize the reading in the first paragraph, identity and discuss a key point in the second paragraph, and then draw a connection in the reading to something else covered in class (readings, lectures, discussion, listening.)

4. Given our upcoming exploration of music and drama, do you have a favorite musical-dramatic work from childhood--perhaps an animated film or movie musical? Describe your relationship with the musico-dramatic work. Reflect on what role the music played in your experience as a listener/consumer. What role did the music play in telling the story? How did music shape the story or your experience? OR

   Return to either the Barber or Crumb works and identify and describe a key moment (or moments) where you find the relationships between the musical setting and the text especially interesting. What is the music doing for the text and how does the text shape the music?

5. Return to the 10 Learning Goals on the course syllabus. Where, specifically, do you feel you've made improvement? Where have you been able to make connections among the content of this course and your other music study and experiences?

   OR

Thinking about the cumulative final exam, what would be good topics for essay questions? What are themes or ideas that have cut across works, composers and musical styles? Which composers/performers/musical genres would it be good to revisit for the listening response? If you could choose a great primary source to explore, what would it be?

LIVE MUSIC RESPONSE

Given the course's emphasis on current music and music-making, it is important to engage with local performances of musics ***created in the last two decades.*** I have identified some key opportunities below [omitted for space], and as a class, we will identify other options available. You may identify events of your own choice, but before attending, you must check with me; the "last two decades" criterion is hard and fast. *You may not write on an event in which you're taking part.*

Your response should be 2-3 word processed pages in length and provide a description of the event and how it intersects with our ongoing class discussions and case studies. You may want to identify and discuss aspects you found particularly interesting, or compare it to works/practices studied in class. You should try to bring into your response issues we've discussed in class concerning reception, audience, tonality, contexts, networks and the realities of race, gender and national identities, etc. Feel free to talk to me about the event before or after. *I encourage you to carry out this assignment collaboratively, attending with classmates and discussing your experiences together*. Your written response, however, should be entirely your own. Responses are due up no later than two weeks following an event.

Professor Levine uses a series of short, weekly informal writing assignments to encourage students to think more deeply about course readings. These assignments lead into a longer final paper.

Professor Caroline Levine
English 177

SHORT, INFORMAL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN A LARGE LITERATURE LECTURE COURSE

In English 177: Literature and Popular Culture, focusing on detective fiction, Professor Levine assigns students 3, informal,1-page writing assignments that ask them to engage more deeply with the week's readings. These short assignments lead up to a final paper. In this large introductory course with 250 students, 5 TAs give feedback on the short assignments.

Completion of the assignments counts for 20% of students' grades.

Weekly writing assignments after the midterm

for April 2: What are THREE specific arguments **against** detective fiction from the readings we are doing this week?

for April 9: The reading we are doing this week suggests that fictional detectives might help us to reflect on real processes of knowledge-gathering in our world. Choose a paper or project you have done for another college class. This could be any kind of project that required you to uncover a solution or develop an answer to a question, from understanding the causes of the Civil War to learning which marketing campaigns have worked best for a particular product. Think about **methods** you used to come to a conclusion. What thought processes and evidence did you use? How would you describe your process of coming to a solution? See if Chadda and Wilson, Kuper or Chesterton help you to reflect on this in any way.

for April 16: This week we are building on last week's writing assignment. Focusing on the methods you used for your paper or project in your other course, find THREE passages that refer to methods of detection in the reading we've done this semester that are similar to your own methods in some way. Explain how they resonate. At least ONE of your passages should come from one of the following writers: Chadda and Wilson, Kuper, Nicolson, Collingwood or "the Life and the Lab" blog post.

for April 23: Choose one of the following paper topics for the paper due May 7. For your weekly writing assignment, state which topic you're choosing and the texts and passages you plan to use.

A. Building on the weekly assignments for April 9 and 16, you are going to imagine your assignment for your other course as a mystery story, with you starring as the detective. Write up a fictional account of your own search for truth, with at least THREE figures or writers from our course as characters who intervene: they might advise you, get in your way, or argue with you about the right way to come to knowledge. At least ONE of these should be one of the writers we read between April 9 and April 23. You will be graded on: 1) how well you show your grasp of questions about method we have been discussing in this class; 2) how seriously you reflect on your own pursuit of knowledge as a complex process; and 3) how well you write the story, including grammar and spelling.

B. Building on the weekly assignments for April 9 and 16, you will write an analytical paper about your search for knowledge in another class. In describing your methods, clues, assessment of evidence, and thought processes, you must refer to at least THREE models of detection we have read this semester. At least ONE of these should be a non-fiction writer we read between April 9 and April 23. You will be graded on: 1) how well you show your grasp of questions of method we have been discussing in this class; 2) how seriously you reflect on your own pursuit of knowledge as a complex process; and 3) how well you craft a clear and strong essay, including grammar and spelling.

C. Make a specific and persuasive argument **against** detective fiction as a model for gathering knowledge in real-life situations. Make sure that you have compelling examples of knowledge that cannot be gained through the detective methods we have encountered, and be clear about why and how the detectives in our course offer misleading, narrow, or unconvincing methods. Make sure to refer to at least THREE different texts we have read this semester. At least ONE of these should be a non-fiction writer we read between April 9 and April 23. You will be graded on: 1) how well you show your grasp of questions of method we have been discussing in this class; 2) how seriously you reflect on the pursuit of knowledge as a complex process; and 3) how well you craft a clear and strong essay, including grammar and spelling.

Professor McClean outlines an in-class essay assignment she uses in her biomedical engineering course to assess students' understanding of an equation and the concepts associated with that equation. She refers to the evaluation criteria shown below to guide her grading of the assignment.

Professor Megan McClean
Biomedical Engineering 330: Engineering Principles of Molecules, Cells, and Tissues

AN IN-CLASS WRITING ACTIVITY IN BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING

1. Learning Outcomes

After completion of this assignment students should have the ability to:

- identify situations that are amenable to analysis using dimensional homogeneity
- clearly explain and summarize, in writing, the concept and importance of dimensional homogeneity
- justify the importance of using dimensional homogeneity in the course and in practical situations (such as analyzing their BME design projects)

2. Assignment Execution

This assignment would be given as an in-class exercise. Students would be allowed to confer in small groups as needed, but each student would be asked to write their own essay. Approximately 15 minutes would be allocated to this assignment. Assignments would be reviewed and graded before the next lecture period, and examples of excellent answers discussed at the beginning of lecture. Common misconceptions present in multiple essays would also be clarified.

3. Student Prompt

You and a classmate are working on a BME design project to build a better extra ventricular drain for patients suffering from traumatic brain injury. You would like to estimate the pressure drop across a particular piece of cylindrical tubing in your device. Your classmate has already taken BME 330 and comes up with the following formula:

$$\Delta p = \frac{32\mu < v > L}{D}$$

where Δp is the pressure drop, μ is the viscosity of the cerebrospinal fluid, $< v >$ is the average velocity of fluid in the tubing, L is the length and D is the inner diameter of the tubing. Even though we haven't gotten to the fluids section of transport yet, you can quickly tell that this formula isn't quite correct.

Write a short explanation (<250 words) explaining to your classmate why this equation cannot be correct. Make sure to state and define the key concept that you are using to determine that the original equation is incorrect. Show how you can use this concept to guess at an appropriate correction to the formula. Explain why this concept is crucial to engineers, and more practically, how it might help you to do better on exams.

4. **Rubric and Grading Criteria**

Grade	Criteria
+	Explanations in this category will identify the fact that units on both sides of the equation are not balanced, and therefore the equation is not physically possible. Furthermore, explanations in this category will clearly identify and explain the key concept of dimensional homogeneity (which is being violated by the original equation). Explanations will identify D^2 in the denominator as a way to satisfy dimensional homogeneity. A compelling argument for the importance of checking dimensional homogeneity in daily practice as an engineer (and as a BME 330 student) will be made. The explanation will be clearly written containing almost no errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar.
√	Explanations in this category will reveal an understanding of the concept of dimensional homogeneity but may be lacking in clarity or fully developed explanation. Explanations that identify the error in the equation, but do not clearly identify and explain the concept of dimensional homogeneity will fall in this category. Explanations that fail to provide a compelling reason for using the concept of dimensional homogeneity will fall in this category. Explanations that correctly identify the key concepts, but are very poorly written will fall in this category.
-	These explanations will be unsuccessful because the writer fails to identify the key flaw in the original equation, fails to clearly identify and explain dimensional homogeneity, and/or fails to write a coherent, grammatically correct explanation. Answers that are clearly written, but fail to identify the key error and principle of dimensional homogeneity or misrepresent the principles of dimensional homogeneity will fall in this category.

Professor Charles L. Cohen introduces and explains goals for his 50-word "Minor Writing assignments." For these assignments, students write a single sentence, no more than 50 words, in response to challenging questions the professor poses.

Professor Charles L. Cohen
History

The 50-Word Assignment

Seeking the Holy Grail of an exercise that teaches writing, advances critical skills, adds only a modicum of time to students' weekly workload, and requires even less time per student to evaluate?

The closest thing I have found is the minor assignment, a 50-word sentence covering the week's reading. Employed frequently—I schedule from perhaps four in a typical undergraduate seminar to as many as nine in an upper-division lecture—minor assignments are the most effective means I know for teaching students the quintessential communicative skill: get to the point!

Rationale

A single-sentence exercise with a finite word limit counters students' proclivity for aerating their prose with superfluities. Given at most 50 words, they must distill their arguments' fundamentals and phrase them concisely, for, as my syllabus warns, the 51st word and its successors face a terrible fate. (I have been known to cut out extraneous verbiage and turn the tattered remnant into a paper airplane—a practice proved sound pedagogically if not aerodynamically.)

50 words might appear too many—the contests cereal companies run, after all, ask for only 25—but I prefer giving students sufficient rope. For one thing, the 50-word limit allows them to cope with the assignment, which often requires complicated responses. For another, it weans them from dependency on simple declarative sentences and challenges them to experiment with multiple clauses. Some can handle compound-complex sentences, but most require—and appreciate—tutelage in them. Nor are 50 words too few; no student has ever complained about an inability to pare down the verbiage. Had Goldilocks stumbled into my section instead of the Three Bears' den, she would have found the word limit "just right."

Sample Assignment

Consider, for example, the assignment that I recently gave students in History/Religious Studies 451, entitled "Constructing a Hypothesis":

Using the maps in the front of the packet, compare the distribution of churches within Anglo-America east of the Mississippi River in 1750 with the distribution in 1850 and, in one sentence not exceeding 50 words (need I say more?), hypothesize the reasons for the difference.

To complete the exercise, students had to examine a series of maps, aggregate data presented graphically, convert them into written form, analyze those data, and develop a hypothesis to explain patterns they may have found. They had to attend carefully to the material (not the least of the minor assignment's benefits is its capacity to monitor students' preparation), read the maps against each other, and offer a succinct but accurate conclusion, thereby rehearsing several critical skills simultaneously.

The quality of the responses varied, as one might expect, but the best submission hit the mark exactly, intellectually and, at 50 words, quantitatively:

The maps show a relative decline in Anglican and Congregational Churches in relation to the growth of other churches between 1750 and 1850, which reflects the shift towards the disestablishment of state churches and the demand for a constitutional guaranty of religious freedom that occurred during the American Revolutionary Settlement.

Even more impressive, English is not the writer's native language.

Benefits and Limitations

50-word sentences cannot help improve the organization of paragraphs and compositions, but that is why God invented essays and term papers. Meanwhile, minor assignments' brevity conceals their degree of difficulty; they require far more intellectual effort than may first appear. At the same time, because I comment on the sentences as profusely as I would a full-scale paper (at far less cost in time—another benefit, one that makes minor exercises effective tools for writing instruction in even large classes like History 101) but do not grade the exercises individually (although failure to complete them lowers one's class participation score), students receive my attention without having to "perform" for an evaluation. They may mess up without cost, for the value of minor assignments lies ultimately not in completing any single task but in repeating them, by which students habituate themselves to really looking at what they write.

And they do. I explain the philosophy of minor assignments during the first discussion section, and in many subsequent sections, I devote a few minutes to them. That I take the assignments seriously means that students do so too, and they quickly grasp the exercises' multiple intents. "They change the way you read," one student said recently, with others chiming in that they "focus" the reading and help one grasp the "big picture" rather than drowning in the details. They influence how students approach larger projects; the concentration put into the sentences has helped at least one student craft his essays so they "get more to the point." Finally, they keep students on their toes. You can fake 1- or 2-page papers on reading assignments, a student confided in section, because you can read a couple of pages and expand on them, but trying to compress one or more readings into 50 words means that "you can't make it up" and, in the process, "eliminates [male bovine feces]."

Additional Resources

For a good example of a student response to the 50-word assignment, see:
history.wisc.edu/cohen/50-word_example.pdf

For more examples of Professor Cohen's minor assignments, see his syllabi online:
history.wisc.edu/cohen/

Student Feedback

As more evidence of the power of these 50-word assignments, Professor Cohen received this email from a former student:

Hello Professor Cohen,

I was in no way remarkable in the Colonial North America course that I took with you several years ago, but I got a lot out of those damned 50-word, one-sentence summaries of entire books. I am still horrible at grammar (there is irony in here somewhere)—but I now—in fact, excel at thesis writing. So much so that I am working on MFA in (Creative) Writing. I now get to stare down young English students and push them into following the grammar rules that I constantly flub and force them to write the exercises that I hated. But hopefully they will get as good at it as you encouraged me to be. Thank you. It was horrible at the time, but unendingly useful now. Thank you.
Feel free to show this to current students as proof.

I am currently reading *Frontier Medicine: From the Atlantic to the Pacific, 1492-1941*, by David Dary. Sigh. Perhaps Mr. Dary could use a creative writer to help him find his storyline. :)

Thanks for everything,

Beth Mattson
San Francisco, CA

In this introductory history course, Professor Charles Cohen gives students a series of short writing assignments to help students practice the kinds of skills and thinking valued by historians.

Professor Charles L. Cohen
History 101

A SERIES OF 50-WORD WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN HISTORY 101

#1 *Tracking change over time* - **due September 13:** [Use the "Minor Assignment #1 Materials" on the class website.] Compare the plat map (1834) of the township around "Fourth Lake" with an economic inventory map of the same area drafted a century later (1939), and, in one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (the 51st word and its successors face a terrible fate), explain to what extent (if any) the land use mapped in 1939 reflects the pattern of parcels laid out in 1834.

#2 *Comparing Different Sources* – **due September 20:** Compare Theodore De Bry's plate XVIII ("Their danses which they use …") with John White's painting of the same scene ("Indians Dancing," Lecture 5, slide 4, course website) and, in one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (or else...), both point out at least one significant way in which De Bry's rendering changes White's original and suggest a possible reason for the difference.

#3 *Constructing a Literary Analysis*- **due September 27:** In one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (see above for implied but real threat), determine whether Mary Rowlandson referred to the Old or New Testament more frequently and suggest the possible significance of this pattern.

#4 *Synthesizing sources* - **due October 18:** Evaluating the evidence presented particularly by the primary sources, explain in one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (surely you understand the drill by now) to what extent (if any) the War for American Independence was also a civil war among Americans.

#5 *Summarizing and critiquing an argument* - **due October 25:** In two sentences NOT EXCEEDING 75 words (but do not let the liberalized word and sentence limits lure you into verbosity), summarize Lepore's argument about the Constitution and then critique it.

#6 *Analyzing rhetoric* - **due November 22:** Probe Philip Hone's attitude towards Andrew Jackson and, in one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (yadda, yadda, yadda), determine the reason(s) for it.

In Professor Christy Tremonti's Astronomy 150 course, students develop expertise about the Big Bang, Dark Matter, and Dark Energy. This assignment asks students to demonstrate their understanding of course content by explaining its importance to an outside audience.

Professor Christy Tremonti
Astronomy 150

WRITING TO AN OUTSIDE AUDIENCE IN ASTRONOMY 150

Learning Goal:
Students will be able to explain why we believe the Universe began in a Big Bang and how we know that most of the Universe is composed of Dark Matter and Dark Energy to an audience no background in astronomy.

Assignment:
Write a 5-6 page letter to the school board of your high school advocating that some basic information about the origin and evolution of the Universe be taught in either middle school or high school. Your letter should be in 11-point type and double spaced.

I am not asking you to actually *send* this letter, just to write it. However, it will be useful if you treat it as a real letter. Think about your audience—the school board members—and what they might know or not know and any prejudices they might have. Think about the tone of your letter. Be professional, but avoid being overly technical. Your letter should have the following basic structure.

- Introduce yourself. Again, think about what the school board might want to know. Citing some of you high school or college accomplishments might be appropriate, but be sure to keep it brief and interesting. This section should be no more than a few sentences.
- Explain why it is important for students to have a solid understanding of our Universe. This section should be fairly short (no more than ½ page total) but be sure to spend time crafting a careful argument. If the school board is unconvinced, they might not read further.
- Describe the content that you think your school should be teaching. It's safe to assume that the school board knows nothing whatsoever about the Universe, so you'll have to educate them about the Big Bang, Dark Matter, and Dark Energy. This will be the focus of the bulk of your paper (4-5 pages).
- Suggest where this topic would fit into the curriculum. Should students be exposed to this material in an elective course or a required course? How much time should be devoted to this material, a week? a month? a semester? Would it be better to teach it in middle school? (If so, you can write to your middle school.) This section should be about a paragraph in length.
- In addition to your letter, you must also fill out a short coversheet that will provide some useful information to your writing fellow. I will send the coversheet via email with your writing fellow's name later today.

Writing Fellows:
We are fortunate to have peer writing tutors, called writing fellows, working with our course. Writing fellows are skilled undergraduate writers who have received special training in writing pedagogy. Each of you will work with one of them outside of class to improve the clarity and effectiveness of your writing. It is mandatory that you work with your writing fellow, as outlined below, even if you consider yourself a great writer.

Timeline:
- *Monday Feb 9:* Read this assignment carefully and ask questions. Meet the writing fellows.
- *Monday March 2:* A polished draft of your paper is due in class. Please bring a printed copy to class and turn in an electronic copy to the Learn@UW dropbox (MS Word Format preferred). By polished draft, I mean a paper that is ready to be turned in and graded. I will send your polished draft to your assigned writing fellow.
- *Monday March 9:* Your writing fellow will return constructive comments on your draft. Their feedback will help you improve the way you structure and present your ideas. (They will not comment on the scientific content of your paper, nor will they proofread it for spelling and grammar mistakes.) You will then set up an appointment to meet with your writing fellow.
- *March 9-18:* Meet individually with your writing fellow and discuss your planned revisions
- *Wednesday, March 23:* A revised draft of your paper is due. You must also turn in your original polished draft with the writing fellows' comments and a cover sheet describing how you addressed those comments.

For a final paper, Professor Steven Nadler asks students to select one philosophical topic discussed in the class and put two or three philosophers, who addressed that topic, in dialogue with each other. In their papers, Nadler expects students to demonstrate their understandings of course topics by articulating each philosopher's positions and their criticisms of each other's views.

Professor Steven Nadler
Philosophy 101, Introduction to Philosophy

A Final Writing Assignment in Philosophy 101

We have covered many philosophical topics this semester, in metaphysics (the nature of reality, the mind-body problem), ethics (What is [the] good? What is happiness? What is the relationship between being good/virtuous and being happy?), political philosophy (Are you obliged to obey the state? Why?), epistemology (What is knowledge? How does it differ from mere belief or opinion?), philosophy of religion (Can the existence of God be rationally demonstrated? What is the difference between knowing something by reason and believing it on faith?), and the meaning of life (What does it mean to say that life/a life is meaningful? Does death render life meaningless? Or, in fact, is it immortality that would make life meaningless?).

We have also read a number of philosophers, both classic and contemporary (Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Epictetus, St. Anselm, Descartes, Kant, Mill, Sartre, Susan Wolf, Bernard Williams, Thomas Nagel, Elizabeth Anscombe, etc.)

For your final paper, you are to write a philosophical dialogue (much like the dialogues of Plato that you read). Chose ONE of the philosophical topics we discussed, and TWO or THREE of the philosophers we studied, and put them in dialogue with each other. How would each philosopher explain his/her position and criticize the views of the other(s)? How would each philosopher respond to the other's criticisms? You may insert yourself into the dialogue as one of the interlocutors, explain whom you would agree with.

5-7 pages, double-spaced.

This research paper assignment from Psychology 411, a course for majors, gives students room to select a topic but moves them beyond writing literature reviews to conveying their understanding of a clinical idea.

Professor Rhonda Reinholtz
Psychology

A Research Paper in a Psychology Course for Majors: Presenting Understanding of a Course Concept

You will be required to write one 2,500-word paper on a topic of your choice relevant to clinical psychology. The paper will be worth 100 points. The paper must be **2,250 – 2,750 words**, typed and double-spaced, not including the reference list. You may not include lengthy quotations of DSM diagnostic criteria.

You will need to submit the final draft of the paper via Dropbox and turn in a printed copy. The paper will be completed in three stages; you will complete a first draft, turned in only through Dropbox, that I will review; a polished draft that your writing fellow will review; and a final version. The first draft should be around 1,500 words but can be only an outline or can be full length, and the second draft (the one turned in to the writing fellows) should be full length. Although I will read through first drafts that are turned in after the due date, I may not do so in a timely manner and you may not be able to make use of my feedback before the draft is due to the writing fellows.

The focus of the term paper assignment is for you to produce a thoughtful exploration of a topic or question relevant to clinical psychology. Your topic may be a particular diagnosis, a research design issue, an aspect of psychotherapy such as transference or play therapy, or virtually any other topic that reflects some facet of clinical psychology. The challenge of the assignment will be to demonstrate that you have synthesized ideas from different sources and have developed a sophisticated understanding of your topic. Your paper must convey to the reader that you have a sound grasp of the concepts about which you are writing and the clinical and/or research implications or challenges of those concepts.

The paper is not a literature review; your focus should be on presenting an understanding of a clinical idea rather than on presenting summaries of research findings. You will need to cite research in order to support the points you are discussing, but the main purpose of the paper is not merely to list research studies and results. The main purpose is to use the research studies and results as a way of developing an understanding of a clinical issue and presenting that understanding to the reader. One way to think of what you need to convey in your paper is to imagine one of your friends asking about your paper topic – you should be able to describe the idea / conflict / situation about which you are writing in a way that clearly shows you understand what it means, why it is important, and so on—you wouldn't answer a friend's question by reeling off statistics, demographics, and other methodology details, but might mention such information while primarily telling your friend what is important and interesting about the data and how you understand it. Your paper won't be written in the sort of conversational tone you would use with a friend, but if you can't easily explain your topic and its implications to a peer, your paper probably is not accomplishing the goal of demonstrating to me that you have a sophisticated understanding of your topic.

You are required to use at least **five articles from peer-reviewed journals** that are not assigned class readings. You may use as many additional sources as you wish, including books, as long as you are making substantial use of at least five journal articles. You may use the class readings only minimally; a paper that relies on information from a required reading for the class will be penalized. Similarly, a paper that primarily focuses on only one or two articles or only one author, with minimal incorporation of additional sources, is not acceptable. Grading criteria for the paper include content, depth, clarity of writing, and typos/proof-reading (see Paper Grading Sheet in the Content section of the Learn@UW website).

In this assignment, Professor Johnson asks students to demonstrate their knowledge of course material using two different argument styles. Students then reflect critically on how productive each argument style was for their audience and purpose.

Professor Jenell Johnson
Communication Arts 262

CRITICAL REFLECTION ON FORMS OF ARGUMENT IN COMMUNICATION ARTS 262

Objectives:

* to demonstrate your grasp of the theory and practice of argument
* to assess the value of different forms of argument
* to develop a clear, well-argued thesis
* to write an organized, purposeful paper that answers, in some form, the ultimate question: So what?

In this paper, you will draw from the concepts we've discussed so far and apply them by critically reflecting on your experience in the informal civil dialogue and competitive debate. Which of the two argument styles did you find more productive? Like the first paper, you'll want to think very carefully about what you mean by "productive" argument and the criteria by which you might assess this category. (You can think about this argument as a definitional argument as well as an evaluation.) Then, move to some larger questions (these are meant to stimulate your thinking – you shouldn't think of them as a checklist): how valuable or productive are these two approaches to argument more generally? What might they offer public discourse? Does one or the other seem more conducive to a civil and/or democratic society? While this paper asks you to draw on your own experience, it's not meant to be a five pages of your musings on "competitive debate is so much fun!" or "civil dialogues are the worst." It should be focused around a main point, and ultimately it should offer your perspective—that is to say, a reasoned argument—on the process and forms of argumentation and their value for civil society and/or democratic politics.

Process

1. Consider carefully what "productive" argument means and determine which of the two styles you determine to better fit this category.
2. Construct a paper around this basic argument, offering good reasons with specific examples and taking care to make a larger argument about the implications of argument forms.

While not necessary to cite the course readings or outside research, it is highly encouraged and, of course, papers should use a particular citation style (MLA, APA) and use in-text citation as appropriate.

10% of final grade
5 pages, double-spaced
Due Friday, 4/8 by 5 PM to Canvas

This short writing assignment in Physics 115 helps students strengthen their abilities to interpret quantitative material in news articles and to make connections between the articles and their learning in the course. The instructor provides clear grading criteria to help students understand his expectations. A successful student response is also shown below.

Professor Justin Vandenbroucke
Physics 115: Energy

AN ARTICLE RESPONSE WRITING ASSIGNMENT IN PHYSICS

Assignment
Some weeks (about six total) there is an article response assignment. Find an article of your choice (**published recently, within the past few months**) related to energy and write a response. Your response should critically discuss what was in the article rather than simply summarize it. Please start your response with a link to the original article and a quick summary. Then move on to analysis of / response to the article. You can explain the physics behind the article, relate it to something we learned in class, point out a mistake, explain why you disagree with something that was written, describe something you didn't understand, point out that there was important information missing from the article, or do a simple calculation regarding the article.

One of the fundamental goals of this course is for you to become a numerate (in addition to literate) citizen. That is, at the end of this course you should be comfortable reading and judging quantitative information in news articles, and when important quantitative information is incorrect or missing you should be able to recognize this and request the correct information or find it for yourself. Article responses are opportunities to develop this skill. An optional format is to address it as a letter to the editor, in response to the original article. **Your response should be short (one or two paragraphs, between 100 and 400 words total).**

Article sources
Be careful to use a reputable source for the article you respond to. Good national and international sources include The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The LA Times, The Economist, The Christian Science Monitor, Science, Nature, BBC News, Discover, Scientific American, Popular Science, Science News, and New Scientist. The Wisconsin State Journal, the Capital Times, and the Isthmus are also good sources for energy-related issues on a local scale (Wisconsin and Madison). Avoid blogs unless you know they are high quality.

Responses are due in Canvas Tuesdays at 5:00pm
Post your article in Canvas by navigating to the assignment (there is a separate one for each writing assignment) and clicking the "Submit Assignment" button. This will open a text box where you can enter your assignment. I recommend typing it first in a separate program and then copying it into the text box, in case there is any problem with the internet or Canvas while you are working.

The Writing Center
The UW–Madison Writing Center is a valuable resource for help improving your writing, available in person or online. You can make an appointment or drop in: http://www.writing.wisc.edu.

Grading scale
Article response grading is as follows:
- 0: not submitted or not submitted on time
  - 8 or lower: submitted on time but poorly done
  - 9: submitted on time and well done
  - 10: submitted on time and outstandingly well done

9 is a good grade. 10 is for responses that are unusually well done.

Your lowest grade from the "writing and other assignments" category (which includes article responses) will be dropped.

Detailed grading criteria (rubric)

What distinguishes a 9 from an 8?
The answer to every question below should be yes, in order to receive a 9 rather than an 8.

- Did you provide a link or reference to the original article?
- Did you choose the article from a reputable source?
- Does the subject of the article relate clearly to energy?
- Did you include a brief (two to three sentence), clear summary of the article?
- Did your analysis of the article include a connection to the physics of energy (rather than focusing exclusively on e.g. economics or public policy)?
- Is the response well written, without spelling or grammar errors?
- Did you provide your own analysis rather than taking analysis from the article?

What distinguishes a 10 from a 9?
The answer to one or more question below should be yes, in order to receive a 10 rather than a 9.

- Is your response particularly interesting and engaging?
- Did your discussion connect the article directly to concepts we have discussed in class?
- Did you include a quantitative discussion/analysis?
- Did you perform a (simple) calculation with numbers either from the article or numbers related to the article that you researched yourself?
- Did you find an error (e.g. confusing energy and power, or using incorrect units) in the article?
- Did you discuss a quantitative aspect of the article that should have been included and was not? For example, if the article was about a new or planned energy source, did the article provide information about how much energy or power the source will provide? This is the first number required on the benefit side of a cost-benefit analysis of an energy source, but is often missing in articles that discuss other aspects in detail.

A Sample Student Response in Physics

Rebekah Ottoway
March 6th, 2018
Article Response 3
Physics 115: Energy (Prof. Vandenbroucke)

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/02/180215180313.htm

In this article from Science Daily, a research team at Virginia Tech are finding new ways to melt the stubborn piles of snow left in parking lots, ditches, and driveways after a snowstorm. They have invented a thermal absorptive blanket equipped with artificial sunlight to speed up the melting process. Their "Melt Mat" received a journal publication and a patent for this technology. The team took a year to get a perfect design that is not only affordable but is also durable. The Melt Mat is environmentally safe and can be used repeatedly compared to other methods of snow removal which are one time use. With the patent on the Melt Mat, the team could possibly have a very profitable future off of their invention.

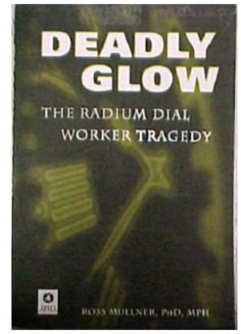
The fundamental problem the team is addressing is the reflection of light off the snow, rather than absorption to aid melting. Because the snow doesn't absorb sunlight well, it doesn't increase its kinetic energy, and therefore stays close to the same temperature even when the temperature increases outside. Structurally, the Melt Mat is made of an aluminum sheet with a coating of black paint. The black color's role in heat absorption is to increase the amount of sunlight absorbed to help make up for the lack of sunlight absorbed of the white snow. The energy absorbed by the black mat will then be transferred to the snow through conduction, resulting in a melting time of the snow that is decreased to one-third the time without any use of energy. To measure the amount of energy needed to melt 20 kilograms of snow, you would calculate Q using this equation: Q = m * heat of fusion (of water). So, Q = 20kg * 4.184 J / kg = 83.68 J of energy used to melt 20 kg of snow at a constant temperature. To calculate the rate of heat conduction from the Melt Mat to the snow can be measured by the equation: H = A* T/r. Since we already know how to solve Q from the previous equation, we can find H but we need to know the resistance of the aluminum in order to solve it. The Melt Mat should have a low resistance in order to transfer heat to the snow efficiently.

In her chemistry course, Professor Cathy Middlecamp has students write powerful stories about what happens when people and radioactivity meet.

Professor Cathy Middlecamp
Integrated Liberal Studies 251

A NARRATIVE ASSIGNMENT IN CHEMISTRY

Project #2 - Radioactivity and People



ILS 251 has several higher order learning goals. One is that you are able to take what you learn in one context and apply it to another. This project offers you the opportunity. We hope you will enjoy it. To quote a former student, the project was "one of my favorites to work on in my college career!"

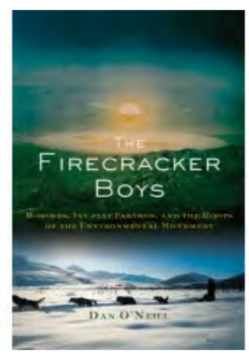
GRADING: Please check the grading criteria and due dates for all parts of this project.

OVERVIEW: This semester, you have encountered two stories in which people and radioactive substances were intimately connected. The first was the Radium Girls; the second the Firecracker Boys. Your task is to find a third story—anywhere on the planet—that involves people and radioactivity.

VIEW FROM A STUDENT: Lindsay wrote this essay for future students taking ILS 251. Her project was closely connected with art, one of her interests. Her research connected her to the sculpture of Tony Price, an atomic artist and peace activist. To quote Lindsay, "I found Tony Price and immediately knew he was my guy."

EXAMPLES: Please examine these topics from previous years. Each concerns both people and radioactive substances. The people are citizens in a city or town, an indigenous group, those living at a particular location, or perhaps those carrying out a common job or mission. The radioactivity may involve contamination of the land, leukemia or lung cancer, the disposal of nuclear waste, testing of atomic weapons, nuclear accidents, the medical experimentation with radioisotopes, or perhaps just having a radioisotope in the wrong place at the wrong time.

- Storing Nuclear Waste on Tribal Lands - Yucca Mountain
- Depleted Uranium (DU) in Iraq - A Weapon of Mass Destruction
- The H-Bomb and the Marshallese People
- Plutonium and the Workers at Kerr McGee Corporation
- The Palomares Incident in Spain
- The Secret Disaster at Mayak



YOUR TOPIC: You each need your own area of inquiry. Accordingly, you must confirm your topic with your instructor before you begin your research. If you wish to work on a particular topic, claim it early. Once your instructor has all of the topics, she will group them according to a master plan (optimistically she can find one). You will know the date of your presentation before spring break.

YOUR PAPER: Mid-semester, you will submit a polished 5-page paper. Your paper must present the reader with a thesis; that is, a point of view that you introduce and later revisit in your conclusion. The first version should be your best work (NOT a "draft") because several of us are going to invest significant time & energy in reviewing what you wrote. Please use this format:

- Software Microsoft Word
- Format Double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12-point font, page numbers at bottom center
- Page 1 Title, your name, date, & name of your Writing Fellow
- Page 2-6 Body of your paper
- Page 7+ Any figures, tables, photographs
- Final page References. Follow this Style Guide

Your Writing Fellow will provide written feedback on your paper and meet with you to discuss specifics. Look to your Writing fellow for (1) help in developing and conveying your thesis, and (2) tips for writing with clarity and style. Your instructor will offer feedback on (1) your content, helping to troubleshoot any glitches, and (2) your references, making sure that you are citing correctly. Use this dual feedback to revise your paper. You will submit a second version at the end of the semester.

THE CLASS PRESENTATION: During April and May, we will dedicate class time to student presentations. These will be scheduled during the period, each for 50 minutes. As part of your presentation, please provide your peers with (1) an assignment to prepare for the class, and (2) a handout of your own design. In turn, your peers will provide you with an assessment.

For this assignment, students are asked to both analyze a piece of epistolary fiction and compose a short epistolary fiction of their own. This juxtaposition of critical inquiry and creative composition helps students develop a more complex understanding of the genre in question. .

Ron Harris, Instructional Coordinator
English

EPISTOLARY FICTION ASSIGNMENT

The purpose of the epistolary fiction assignment is to offer you the opportunity to explore further epistolary discourse. Epistolary discourse is a major element in the development of the modern novel and, arguably, represents the lasting presence of Ovid's stylistic innovation. In many respects, Ovid's *Heroides,* his collection of fictional letters, represents a starting point for the study of the novel. At the same time, the *Heroides* also represent a form of erotic elegy, a form we explored earlier in the semester. Hence, the epistolary fiction assignment builds upon your writing and thinking for the erotic elegy paper. The assignment asks you to analyze, in some detail, a piece of epistolary fiction, presumably one we've studied together, and then to try your hand at writing a short piece of epistolary fiction.

The epistolary fiction assignment will also help to clarify your study of Ovid's major epic poem, the *Metamorphoses*. Quite often, the study of Ovid and of Ovid's influence in modern literature amounts to the thematic study of individual episodes chopped out of the *Metamorphoses,* to the near exclusion of any consideration of the poem taken as a whole. The epistolary fiction assignment asks you to do this very thing, to rip an episode out of its context in *Metamorphoses* to use as raw material for your own work of art.

Part one, Analyze a short piece of epistolary fiction. I recommend that you choose one of the pieces we studied in class: one of Ovid's *Heroides* or the selection from Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa.* The purpose of your analysis should be to investigate how the particular piece of epistolary fiction works, with an eye toward writing your own epistolary fiction. Your focus will depend upon the kind of fiction you plan to write (see part two, below). If you plan to write one extended letter, along the lines of the *Heroides*, then you should choose to analyze how this extended fictional letter works. If you choose to write double letters (like those between Hero and Leander), then you'll also want to consider the intertextual relationships between these two letters. If you choose to write a series of letters, then you'll probably want to analyze the letters from *Clarissa,* particularly their ordering and transitions. Keep in mind our class room discussion of epistolary discourse, including the short Aunt Edith letters, and also the arguments made by John Dryden and Samuel Richardson, in their prefaces. Again, the purpose of this analysis is to prepare you to write your own piece of epistolary fiction.

Better papers will make frequent and specific reference to the text of the particular epistolary fiction. This paper should be about two pages in length, typed and double-spaced in 11 or 12 point type. **Due in class on Wednesday, March 23.**

Part two, Analyze an episode or passage from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. How does the passage work in the poem, in terms of both *carmen perpetuum* and *carmen deducite*? In what context does the episode appear? How does Ovid construct transitions to and from the episode? How do these contexts help you to interpret the passage? **Due in class on Friday, March 25.**

Part three, Write a piece of epistolary fiction, after Ovid or Richardson. Rewrite the passage from the *Metamorphoses* (the one you analyzed in part two) in the form of epistolary fiction, taking as your model the passage you analyzed in part one (i.e., either Ovid or Richardson).

Think of the passage from the *Metamorphoses* as your raw material. Feel free to make any changes you find necessary or desirable. You can't retell the whole story, so don't even try. Instead, decide what problem or point of tension you wish to investigate. Perhaps you will want to abstract some image or quality from the episode. Don't feel like you have to resolve the problem you introduce. After all, Ovid rarely resolves problems. In short, make the episode your own. Think of yourself as Shakespeare sitting down to write *Romeo and Juliet*, or *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* No pressure.

As was the case in your erotic elegy, keep in mind that you personally are not the speaker in your fiction. Rather, each letter constructs a fictional persona, defined by the existence of the addressee. While writing, try to incorporate the features and elements you identified in your analysis of epistolary discourse in part one of the exercise. Take advantage of the slippery nature of English words, which often take on two or three meanings. Don't worry so much about the artistic quality of your fiction. The purpose of the exercise is not to write good fiction, but rather to learn how epistolary fiction works. Try to create some point of tension, but don't feel like you've got to resolve that tension in your short sequence. In fact, deferral and refusal to resolve tensions are important elements of epistolary fiction. Part of the pleasure of epistolary fiction seems to come out of that long, drawn-out process of narration.

Give proper attention to the formal qualities of letter writing and letter reading. Traditionally, letters were written on pieces of paper and transmitted manually (i.e., by hand, though whose hand delivered the letter and to whom it was delivered sometimes become complicating issues within the fiction), because that was the technology of the day. Today, we've also got various electronic forms for epistolary correspondence, including e-mail and text messaging. Your fiction doesn't need to be entirely in one form. Feel free to incorporate those kinds of forms into your fiction, but be mindful of the relationships between your characters and technology. My guess is that Great Aunt Edith, our fictional correspondent, would not text message. Hence, any text message sent to her would not be read, or at least it wouldn't be read by her. Likewise, she would likely be insulted to receive a "thank you" note via e-mail. Just imagine how these kinds of complications might play out over a series of letters between and among a variety of characters. How would this series of letters provide us with a complete story? What kind of story would that be?

Regardless of the form of your fictional letters, please reduce them all to paper, particularly the electronic forms of communication. If you want to submit handwritten cards or letters, you may, but please also include a typescript of the text, just in case I have difficulty reading your writing. If the specific form of the epistle isn't immediately clear, please include this information in an editorial note. For example, if one item is supposed to be a post card, you might note [post card] as a header.

Your epistolary fiction should be of sufficient length for you to explore the workings of the form. If you write one long letter (after Ovid), then you'll probably need several pages. If you write a series of short letters, then you'll probably need at least five letters between or among three characters, with letters written by at least two of the characters. If you chose to include text messages, you should count one short sequence of text messages (one "conversation") as a single letter. Although Ovid wrote his letters in elegiac couplets, you may write in prose. **Due in class on Wednesday, March 30.**

Part four, analyze your own epistolary fiction. Briefly, analyze your epistolary fiction, in terms of both epistolary discourse and your rewriting of the passage from the *Metamorphoses*. Don't concern yourself with artistic quality, but instead consider how well you've managed to work within the conventions of the genre. Also, give some thought to how your fiction transforms the passage from the *Metamorphoses*. This part should take about one page. **Due Friday, April 1.**

Part five, attempt to define epistolary discourse. Based on your experience in this unit of the class (both reading and writing assignments, including this one) attempt to define epistolary discourse or epistolary style. What does it mean for a fictional first-person speaker to address a fictional second person? You might also want to consider whether or how epistolary discourse or style is "Ovidian." As was the case with the elegy assignment, the point of this part of the assignment is to consider stylistic qualities Ovid brought to literature, in addition to the subjects he wrote about. The significance of distinctions between subject and style will become increasingly clear as we move through the semester. This part should take between two and four pages. **Due Monday, April 4.**

The final portfolio will be due sometime after April 4.

To help students prepare for an exam, Professor Katherine McMahon provides potential questions, based on some hypothetical scenarios, that challenge students to draw on knowledge and concepts from the course. McMahon also gives students an idea of how thorough they need to be in their responses.

Professor Katherine McMahon
Microbiology 425, Environmental Microbiology

POTENTIAL EXAM QUESTIONS IN A MICROBIOLOGY COURSE

The questions below are all fair game for the final exam. I will select roughly half of the content for the actual exam. The actual exam will also include 5-8 multiple choice questions (not listed here).

For guidance on how much detail to provide in your answer, I am listing the approximate number of lines I would expect you to use on the actual exam, to answer the question. The last page of this document has line numbers to use for calibration purposes.

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1. Imagine that after graduation you secure a job at an environmental remediation firm as the resident (micro)biologist, mainly because you took Microbiology 425 and have expertise in environmental microbiology. They hire you to advise a team of ecologists, engineers, and chemists on a range of pollution cleanup and mitigation projects. The first big project you are assigned to is an oil spill that just occurred because an oil tanker sank in Puget Sound, Washington.
   a. The engineers propose spraying a chemical dispersant called Corexit on the oil slick because they read about its use for the Deep Water Horizon spill cleanup. The ecologists disagree because they think it is too toxic to wildlife.
      i. Explain to both the engineer and the ecologist the purpose of the dispersant (6 lines).
      ii. The team wants your advice on whether the dispersant will actually work and to provide evidence from past studies about its effect on microbial processes. Outline the technical report you would provide to them. (20 lines)
      iii. Specifically, the team wants to know whether the oil and dispersant degradation rates will be comparable to those reported for the Deep Water Horizon spill. Compare and contrast the conditions at the location of the current spill vs the DWH, in order to answer their question. Focus on conditions that are relevant to the microbes. (15 lines)
   b. You are given a large research budget to study the effects of the oil spill on the microbial communities in Puget Sound. Outline THREE datasets that you would collect and briefly describe how you would collect them. (30 lines)
   c. Describe the results you would expect to obtain from your studies. Specifically, which organisms do you expect to be enriched in water affected by the spill? (10 lines)
   d. Identify at least three genes or pathways you would expect to find enriched in Puget Sound after the spill. (6 lines)
   e. One of the ecologists asks whether the team should expect to find a lot of *Methylomonas* in the water, since he read that this genus was enriched after the DWH spill. Answer her question and explain your answer. (10 lines)
   f. One of the engineers asks why oil spills cause dissolved oxygen depletion. She learned about biological oxygen demand in her class on wastewater treatment but doesn't understand why oil would have the same effect as sewage. Explain the mechanism of hydrocarbon-mediated DO depletion to her. (15 lines)

2. Imagine that you just joined the laboratory of a famous oceanographer who up until recently has not employed many of the more modern molecular techniques to the study of marine microbes. Thus, she is unfamiliar with the strengths and limitations of various molecular methods. She is funding you as a PhD student to study the role of polyamines in the ocean because a recent analysis of metagenomic data showed that genes encoding polyamine transporters were abundant in many marine samples. While doing some background reading, you learn that polyamines are found in marine phytoplankton.
   a. The PI asks you to analyze some unassembled metagenomes and tell her which of the major heterotrophic marine bacteria have polyamine transporters in their genomes. You know this is not possible to do without gathering additional data. Explain why this is the case. (8 lines)
   b. Propose a workflow that could be used to generate the information your PI is seeking, assuming no budgetary constraints. (15 lines)
   c. Now that you know which marine bacteria carry polyamine transporter genes, your PI wants to know which of these bacteria are actively using polyamines, in water off the coast of Georgia. Propose a workflow that could be used to generate the information your PI is seeking. (15 lines)
   d. Now imagine that a new undergraduate researcher joins the lab. He has never taken a course in environmental microbiology or marine microbiology. The PI asks you to explain the concept of the Microbial Loop to this new lab member. Outline how you would do this, using the polyamines as an illustrative example. Feel free to draw a diagram if you think it would help. (12 lines)

3. The nitrogen cycle in freshwater lakes is complex. In temperate eutrophic lakes such as Lake Mendota, which thermally stratify during the summer, ammonium accumulates to high concentrations in the hypolimnion. When the lake turns over

and mixes in the fall, the ammonium is distributed throughout the water column and persists at concentrations ~ 1 mg-N/L until ice forms. During the winter under the ice, much of the ammonium is gradually converted to nitrate.

a. Identify the individual steps in the conversion of ammonium to nitrate. Write the balanced reactions. (6 lines)
b. Nitrite concentrations under the ice rarely rise above 20 uM. Predict which groups of nitrite oxidizing bacteria would be found under the ice in the winter: *Nitrospira* or *Nitrobacter*. Justify your answer. (8 lines)
c. The dissolved oxygen concentrations under the ice tend to be high when the ice forms, but they become depleted during winter leading up to the spring thaw (but not to the point of "hypoxia"). Outline the processes that are leading to this oxygen consumption in the context of the carbon cycle under the ice. Compare and contrast this with what is happening in such lakes during the summer. (15 lines)

These two related short formal writing assignments in a large lecture course ask students 1) to summarize multiple perspectives about a topic and 2) to make connections between course content and individual research—and to do so very concisely.

Patricia McConnell
Zoology 335

TWO SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN ZOOLOGY

Assignments: You need to turn in two assignments over the course of the semester, all based on one of the three topics announced during the 3rd week of class. All three topics will be related to a current controversy regarding human/animal relationships; examples from previous years are "Wild Caught versus Farm Raised Salmon," "Trap, Neuter and Release in the Management of Free-Ranging Cats," and "Decompression Research on Sheep." Here are brief descriptions of the two papers you will write:

1) **A THREE to FOUR PAGE PAPER, DUE March 13th**: A three to four page paper illustrating that you have examined the biological aspects of your topic from several different perspectives. You can define "biological" broadly—including the issue's effects on the human community and on the economy, if it relates to the controversial aspects of your topic. This will require using information from 3 sources: lecture, readings and independent research. Most importantly, a good paper will present an **objective** description of at least two perspectives, usually including the arguments both "for" and "against" a particular stand. See below for more details, and see Learn@UW for exemplary examples. Worth 100 points.

2) **A 90 WORD PAPER, DUE April 10th**. Write no more than 90 words that 1) summarize a philosophy from class that is 1) relevant to the topic of your 3-4 page paper, 2) close to your own perspective, and 3) applies it to the topic itself. This assignment will require a lot of thought and editing. You MUST stay under the word limit, and you must do a good job of advocating for a particular outcome based on the philosophy you choose. Worth 50 points. See exemplary examples posted on Learn@UW.

Logistics: Pay careful attention to the page and word limits. Your first paper will not receive full credit if it is under or over the page limit. Thus, your first full paper must be no less than three pages, but no longer than four. Your second paper must be under 90 words but still adequately address the issue. Any paper over the word limit will be returned. The paper length is limited for obvious reasons and is one of your biggest challenges—in each case, every word is critical.

The page limit does not include your list of references. (References are not necessary for your 90 word paper.) Your papers must be typed (no smaller than 12 point font) and be 1.5 or double-spaced. A cover page is not necessary, but be sure that your name is clearly attached to your paper. You must number each page. Please avoid plastic or other fancy covers - use plain paper and staple the pages together. **Please note that full credit requires you to follow these directions.** You will lose points if your references are cited incorrectly, your paper is too long or too short, or the font is too large or too small.

Topic/Research: You must do your paper on one of the assigned topics, please do not ask to use another topic. You are expected to do independent research on your topic, and to cite references in the paper itself. You are encouraged to inform yourself by reading articles from the popular press and the web, but you must include articles from scientific journals. Your other main source of information should be assigned readings and lectures. Although each topic varies, between 15 and 20 total references are usually acceptable for the biology paper. References are not required for the second paper.

Evaluation: Your three to four page paper, due on March 13th, is worth 100 points. Your 90 word paper due on April 10th, and is worth 50 points.

Goals of Your Three To Four Page Paper: This paper should illustrate that: 1) you have examined the biological aspects of your topic from several different perspectives and understand the arguments both "for" and "against" a particular stand, and 2) whether you have used what you learned in lecture, research and readings to objectively and critically analyze the issue(s). We will evaluate your paper based on the breadth of issues presented and whether they are discussed in depth. Don't hesitate to define "biological aspects" broadly. For example, the issues discussed might range from the impact on the environment to the impact on the economy (and thus on the welfare of humans). In other words, be sure to include humans in the "biotic community" when you are looking at this controversy. You'll find examples of good papers on Learn@UW under Papers.

90 Word Paper Description: This paper (90 words maximum) needs to summarize one of the philosophies that we've discussed in class and apply it to the topic of your 3-4 page paper. A good paper will provide a concise but thorough summary of a philosophical perspective, along with the reasons that it advises one should do "X" in relation to the controversial question. That is a lot of information to put into 90 words, but a good paper can be short and yet informative. Tip: Do not put this assignment off until the last minute, because a good paper will require many edits and a lot of thought. You'll find examples on Learn@UW under Papers.

This mini-proposal assignment prepares students for an end-of-semester presentation on a peer-reviewed journal article. Professor Angela Kita provides guidelines for selecting a topic and journal article, as well as several questions that help students read and understand their chosen article. The assignment is meant to serve as a blueprint, helping students start preparing for the presentation earlier in the semester.

Professor Angela Kita
Biomolecular Chemistry

JOURNAL ARTICLE MINI-PROPOSAL IN BIOMOLECULAR CHEMISTRY 504

Purpose: As part of our end of the semester mini-symposium, you and a partner will prepare a 10 minute presentation about a paper of your choosing. In preparation, you will compose a mini-proposal about the paper you intend to select. We will review these proposals to ensure that the papers that are presented to the group are sufficiently broad and scientifically rigorous.

Pick an article from a well-respected, peer-reviewed journal (examples: Cell Press, PLoS, PNAS, Journal of Biological Chemistry, Science, Nature, etc.) on a topic that interests you. The article should 1) use a biochemical technique and 2) use some sort of model system (yeast, cell culture, animals, etc.) to answer an interesting biological question. There are literally 1000s of options that would be acceptable, so pick something that is *interesting to you*.

- Post your selected paper to the Canvas discussion board by **5pm on Tuesday 2/6**.
- Insert text and figures into this document and submit it via Canvas before **5pm on Tuesday 2/20**.
- Presentation draft (as a powerpoint) due on Canvas **5pm Tuesday 4/24**.

1. What is the citation of your paper? Use a journal-style citation that includes authors, title, journal, year, volume and page numbers (see citations in appendix D).

2. Using 3 sentences or less: Briefly describe the topic of study and the question you think this paper is attempting to address.

3. Using 4 sentences or less: Briefly describe what techniques the author use to address this question, and what the overall conclusion of the paper is. *Do not simply restate the abstract*, this should be in your words.

4. Pick one figure where the authors used a **biochemical technique**. Create a screen shot or download the image of this figure to paste into this document. In 4 sentences or less, describe the main point of this figure and how it fits into the overall story of the paper.

5. Pick one figure where the authors used an ***in vivo* model**. Create a screen shot or download the image of this figure to paste into this document. In 4 sentences or less, describe the main point of this figure and how it fits into the overall story of the paper.

6. In 4 sentences or less, describe what future directions or unanswered questions either the authors bring up in the discussion or that you thought of after reading the paper. How might these questions be addressed?

7. In 2 sentences or less, describe why you think this paper would have broad interest for your fellow students.

In the following assignment, Professor Christa Olson asks her students to practice the analytic skills learned in class to compose a written analysis of a photograph. Note especially her numerous suggestions for research questions and explicit explanation of evaluation criteria.

Professor Christa Olson
English 550

WRITTEN ANALYSIS OF A PHOTOGRAPH IN ENGLISH

Assignment II: Historical Visions

This assignment will help you build your skills as a rhetorical critic, with a particular focus on historical and contextual analysis. You'll choose a historical photograph of University life and investigate its context, circulation, and use. As a class, we'll spend time in campus archives and discuss historical research techniques. As the Campbell & Burkholder chapter on contextual analysis suggests, your task for this assignment is to identify how your image is "a product of, and function[s] within, a particular historical context" (49). Your final product will be an essay that makes a specific, arguable claim about the photograph and its context and then demonstrates that claim through analysis of the photograph and supporting materials. Enroute to that essay, you'll also produce a close reading of your chosen photograph, a narrated slideshow of additional photographs designed to provide visual context, and an essay draft for peer review.

The photograph you choose for your research and analysis should elicit a question or comparison when you look at it. It should shock, confuse, or surprise you; it should make you wonder what's going on, why it was taken, or how the pictured event happened. You should also choose a photo that gives you leads for research: a photo of an unidentified man on a balcony may be interesting, but it will be hard to write a paper if you can't connect the photo to an event, issue, or group.

<u>Step 1: Close Analysis</u>

On Tuesday, March 6, we'll make our first visit to the University Archives. During that visit, you'll select a photograph as your central artifact for the project. Before class on Thursday, March 8, spend some time with that photograph and prepare a written close analysis of it. Using the tools of compositional analysis and descriptive analysis discussed earlier in the semester, describe the visual elements of the photograph, imagine its possible audiences, and consider its purpose and tone. Close Analyses should be 2-3 double-spaced (typed) pages long. Bring your analysis to our class at the Archives on March 8 and plan to turn it in at the end of the session (you can use the analysis during class to help guide your research).

<u>Step 2: Beginning Research</u>

Once you've chosen and analyzed the elements of your photo, you'll turn to researching the context for it in order to better understand what your photograph tells us about University life and identity. To begin, look for archival and historical evidence. Using campus newspapers, scrapbooks, yearbooks, letters, other photographs, etc. look for answers to questions such as:

- Who took the photograph? Why?
- Who saw the photograph at the time it was made? Did it circulate publicly?
- What does the photograph tell us about life at the University of Wisconsin?
- What major issues or questions discussed on campus at the time show up in photograph?
- What groups or organizations is the photograph connected to and what were they like?
- Does the photograph show something that was typical or atypical on campus at the time?
- What did other people have to say about the events/spaces/people in the photograph?
- Does the photograph connect to events beyond the University? How?

<u>Step 3: Make a Context Slideshow</u>

As you're doing research, keep an eye out for photographs, maps, and other images that you think help clarify what's going on in your main photograph. Of those images, select 9 that you find particularly evocative or useful for explaining what's going on in your main photograph. Arrange those nine images, along with your main photograph, into a ten-image slideshow. Then, record an audio narration to run under the slideshow that explains how the images you've chosen provide context for your main photograph. The finished slideshow should be two minutes and thirty seconds long, or approximately 15 seconds per slide. You'll present your slideshows during class on March 20 and 22.

Step 4: Writing the Paper

Based on your research and previous analyses (Steps 2 & 3), write a paper that presents your photograph and makes a claim about how it might have been seen, used, or understood in its original context. To craft your claim, you may want to draw on some of the rhetorical concepts we've developed in class. Your paper should present and support a clear argument about the use and meaning of the photograph: its rhetorical force.

Bring a draft of your Historical Visions paper to class on Thursday, March 29. We'll take some time during class to exchange papers and organize plans for offering peer review.

The final paper should be 6-8 pages long (double-spaced, 12-pt standard font, 1" margins) and should be submitted to Learn@UW by 11:59pm on Sunday, April 15.

Evaluation of the final paper will be based on the following criteria:

- A clearly articulated argument about the photograph's rhetorical force in context
- Appropriate evidence that supports, demonstrates, and justifies the argument
- Successful use of the skills for analysis we've been developing in class
- Persuasive explanation of exigency (why does this picture matter, then and now?)
- "Details": citations, proofreading, evidence of effort and care

Schedule in Brief

Tuesday, March 6 – Meet at the University Archives in Steenbock Memorial Library to select main photograph

Thursday, March 8 – Meet at the University Archives. Bring 2-3 page close analysis of photograph.

Tuesday, March 20 – Have 10-image slideshows complete. Present either today or March 22

Thursday, March 29 – Bring draft of Historical Visions paper to class

Sunday, April 16 – Final Historical Visions paper due on Learn@UW

In this advanced economics course, students write a report based on a figure provided by the instructor. Students interpret the figure and make an argument about the data using two sources.

Dr. Maria Muniagurria
Economics 475

A Written Report on Schooling Data in Economics 475

Fig. 4.2 from Easterly (2001, Ch. 4 page 76) shown in class and reproduced below presents data on diverse growth outcomes from educational expansion in Africa (1965-1985). Select one of the countries in the figure (i.e. Senegal, Botswana, Madagascar, Ghana or Lesotho) and write a 3-5 page report presenting relevant evidence and critical explanations of what happened to GDP pc and schooling (levels and growth rates) during these years.

- You need to use/cite at least two sources and present quantitative evidence (Tables/Figures).
- Your writing should be clear and your Figures/tables should support your arguments. *References*: Easterly, William, *The Elusive Quest for Growth: Economists' Adventures and Misadventures in the Tropics*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2001.

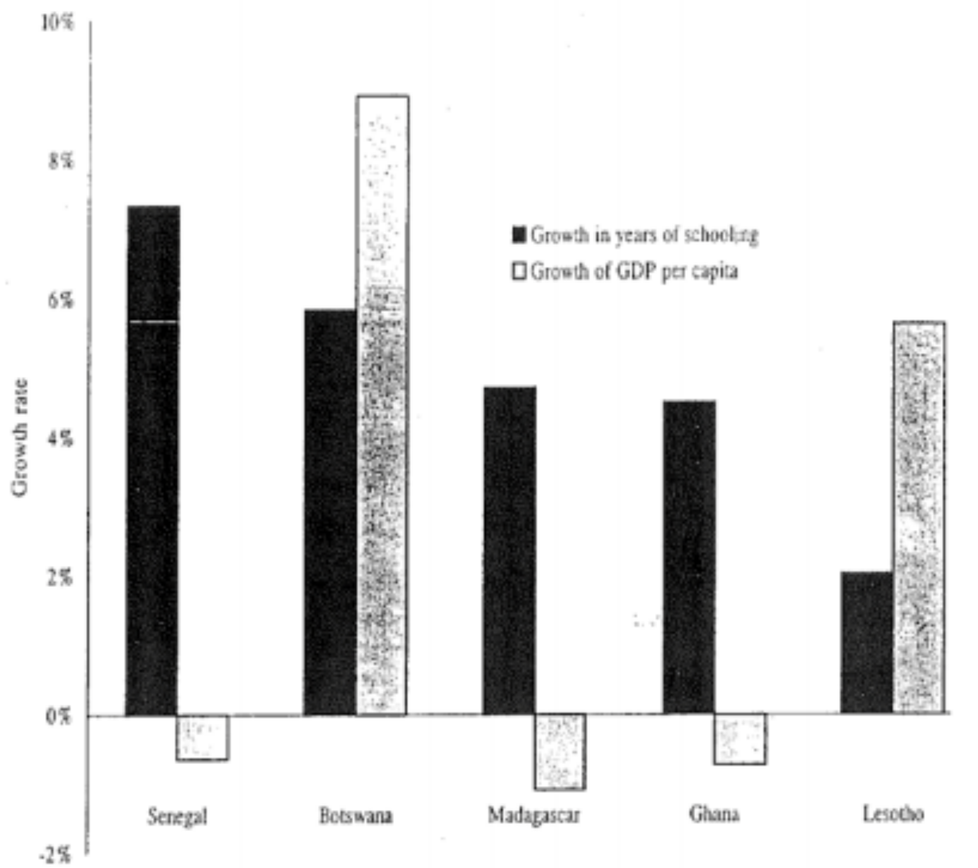


Figure 4.2
Diverse growth outcomes from educational expansion in Africa, 1965–1985. *Source:* Benhabib and Spiegel 1994

Professor Ankur Desai asks students to compute their carbon footprints and to evaluate policy recommendations in light of these computations. She guides students through a process of synthesizing scientific, technological, economic, and political considerations.

Professor Ankur Desai
Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences and Environmental Studies

CARBON FOOTPRINT ANALYSIS: A WRITTEN ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPUTATION

Assignment #3, due: Friday, November 7, in class
In this assignment, you will write about your own personal carbon footprint and the difficulty of modifying human behavior to stabilize future climate change.

First, compute your carbon footprint, a measure of your personal contribution to the addition of CO_2 to the atmosphere. You will need to know something about your electric/heating bills, miles you drive, flights you've taken, etc. If you are not sure of a specific answer, make your best guess. Here are four sites you should try. You are welcome to try others that you find in addition to these:
www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx
www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/calculator/
www.bp.com/iframe.do?categoryId=9023118&contentId=7045317
www.zerofootprint.net/one_minute/earthhour

Also, read these articles, posted on the Learn@uw website. Supplementary articles are also available on the site.

Center for American Progress, 2008, *Cap and Trade* 101. http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/01/capandtrade101.html. Retrieved Oct. 23, 2008.
Higgins, 2007, A Year to Solve the Climate Program, *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, doi:10.1175/BAMS-88-8-1181.
Mankiw, 2007, One Answer to Global Warming: A New Tax, *New York Times*, Sept. 16, 2007.
Pielke Jr., 2007, Lifting the Taboo on Adaptation, *Nature*, 445:597-598.

Then write a brief analysis of proposed technical, economic, and political solutions to climate change while considering these questions:

- Report your carbon footprint from the above four sites in tons of CO_2 equivalent (note that 1000 kg = 1 metric ton). Also report your average of all the sites. You might want to include a table in your paper. Was your footprint higher than the national average? What is your largest source of emissions? What difficulties did you have in estimating the numbers for the surveys? If your footprint numbers varied greatly among sites, why do you think that is? What does that say about the complexity of measuring individual carbon emissions?
- Consider purchasing carbon offsets, a system where your carbon emissions would be neutralized by sequestration of carbon elsewhere. How much would your total cost be if offsets cost \$40/ton CO_2? Would you be willing to pay that?
- Imagine instead that a federal carbon emissions tax was implemented. Considering your average footprint, if the carbon tax is set at \$100 per ton of CO_2, would such a tax change your carbon emitting behavior (compute the total cost)? How about \$10/ton and \$1000/ton? What ways (if any) would you try to reduce your carbon emissions? Will your carbon emissions increase in the future? Does this seem like a good way to change behavior and would it make a significant difference with respect to global warming?
- In the articles above (or in any supplementary material), what kinds of solutions are proposed for mitigation or adaptation to climate change. Consider actions such as adaptation, emission taxes/trading, geotechnical engineering, reducing poverty, and global carbon stabilization treaties. In your opinion, which solutions are more likely to work and what obstacles are there to their implementation? Which solutions are most likely to directly impact your behavior (e.g., lower your carbon footprint, affect your daily life, change your career track)?
- What proposals do the current major party presidential candidates (who are currently senators) provide on the U.S. response to climate change? If you like, you may also try to dig up policy positions of minor party candidates or previous presidential candidates. In your opinion, which of the candidates would most effectively deal with climate change? Which, if any, of the candidate positions most resonate with your own? Assuming you are eligible to vote in the U.S., will or did the candidates' positions on climate change and regulating carbon emissions affect your vote? If you are not eligible, then speculate on how it might.

Paper guidelines:

- State clearly in the first paragraph what your main theme will be. One good way to do this is to include a "roadmap sentence" at the end of the first paragraph, giving an indication to the reader what the overall progression of ideas will be. Be sure to include several examples from the reading to use in your arguments.
- 4-5 pages means at least four full pages (not two pages and one line). Pages beyond five will not be read.
- Double-spaced, 1" margins, number your pages, no title page, your name and title on top of page 1 (single spaced).
- Citations (required) should be in a standard accepted format.
- 12-point font. Following are preferred: Times, Times New Roman, Helvetica, Arial, Palatino, Palatino Linotype.

Professor Wendy Crone combines reflective and formal writing assignments throughout the semester in engineering physics courses. By building in writing workshops, she gives students the opportunity to learn from each other.

Professor Wendy Crone
Engineering Physics Sequence 468, 469, 568, 569

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE RESEARCH SEQUENCE IN ENGINEERING PHYSICS

Notes on Writing Assignments:

Assignments: Various assignments are given throughout the course. Writing is a critical component of a successful research career and is emphasized in the majority of the assignments given.

Reflective Writing Assignments: All "Reflective Writing Assignments" should be 1 page in length (unless otherwise indicated), typed, single spaced, 12 point font, and 1 inch margins. It is expected that these writing assignments will incorporate good grammar and well thought out, structured paragraphs. All sources should be referenced in a standard citation format and included with the assignment.

Writing Assignments:

Reflective Writing Assignment: Meet with your research mentor and develop a common set of expectations for your research project and your development as a researcher. Write about the skills you will need to develop, how you plan to go about developing these skills, and the goals you have set out for your research project.

Reflective Writing Assignment: Ask your research mentor to identify a "good" senior or master's thesis in the same general field as your research topic. Read this thesis and turn in a 1 page reflection commenting on the organization of the thesis, what you learned about thesis writing through your reading of this "good" example. What was done well by the author, and what modifications you would suggest to improve the thesis?

Writing Assignment: Find two additional papers relevant to your research interests; read them and write a paragraph that discusses the findings and how they are relevant to each other. This paragraph should be written in a technical writing style appropriate for inclusion in your proposal or thesis. Include the citations of the 2 papers in your assignment.

Reflective Writing Assignment: Consider class discussions, readings, and research experiences. What was the most surprising thing you have learned so far this semester about how research is conducted? How did this new information conflict with your prior understanding/assumptions?

Reflective Writing Assignment: Write a 2 page self-evaluation on your development as a researcher. Reflect on where you have been, where you are now, and what you will work on next in your development as a researcher.

Writing Workshops for the Engineering Physics Research Sequence:

Workshop on Writing a Scientific Paper/Proposal (Writing Workshop I): You will each need to produce a piece of writing **by midnight on Monday** for the writing workshop you will be participating in during class on Wednesday. Use the eCOW 2 Drop Box to hand in your writing piece including the cover page information discussed in the syllabus. All EP 469/568/569 students also have access to the files placed in this Drop Box. Read "Suggestions for Responding to a Colleague's Draft" prior to reviewing your classmates' work. **Before class on Wednesday**, you must read the writing pieces of all the group members you have been assigned to and come to class prepared to discuss the writings. You will need to come to class with a copy of your own writing piece and cover page as well.

Writing Workshop Cover Page Requirements: The following questions should be addressed in the cover page of the writing piece:

1. What part of your proposal/thesis is this draft (for example, the introduction to my thesis; or the review of technical literature; or the first part of the results section . . .)?
2. What are your *main* points in this section?
3. What *specifically* are you happy with and do you think is working well in this section?
4. What *specifically* would you especially like some feedback on or help with in this draft?
5. Anything else your readers should know to read this draft in a way that will be helpful to you?

Follow Up Reflective Writing Assignment:

Reflect on our practice Writing Workshop and Writing Workshop I. Discuss the parts of the process that worked well and what could be improved. Consider Hughes' "Suggestions for Responding to a Colleague's Draft" and how it can be refined for technical writing. What are specific critical questions that must be asked for a proposal or thesis?

This assignment from an introductory course in literature asks students to analyze an "echo" or a repetition of a textual feature. The assignment defines terms for students and is very clear about the genre that is expected from them.

Professor David Zimmerman
Introductory Literature

ANALYZING TEXTUAL ECHOES IN LITERATURE

This course requires that you write three "echo" analyses in addition to the two major essays. Each analysis should be typed, single-spaced, and 1-2 pages (that means *over* 1 page, or 500-1000 words). The aim of this assignment is to give you practice making observations and claims about ideas and arguments embedded in literary texts. These papers allow you to gain analytical traction with a text by discerning textual "echoes" around which to build a focused analysis, and to participate with confidence in class discussion.

<u>First, some definitions:</u>
A ***textual echo*** is a sequence of details, passages, textual features, or moments that the author invites us to compare and contrast. Every text is laced with dozens, if not hundreds, of echoes. Some are obvious—the author may actually repeat a specific phrase or image—and some are subtle, requiring a more patient, attentive eye to notice. The component "parts" of an echo may be far apart in a text (for example, in the opening and concluding scenes of a novel). What is echoed may be an image (e.g., a sunset, a wall, a sound), a phrase, a plot point, a reference, a way a scene is structured, a stylistic feature, or some other feature that signals a purposeful likeness to (and difference from) an earlier or later moment.

A ***keyword*** is a topic (e.g., "sexual violence"), concept (e.g., "selfhood"), or literary or aesthetic feature (e.g., narrative structure) that the text seems to be studying or saying something about. A keyword might also name an issue ("the right to privacy"), theme ("imperialism"), problem ("class conflict"), or question ("how far does moral responsibility extend across time?") studied by the text. Keywords offer a conceptual lens or frame through which to read and analyze a text. They allow us to link textual details, passages, and moments, and they allow us to understand how particular features of a text serve to clarify what an author is saying or showing about a particular topic, problem, or question. Every literary text offers many keywords for analysis.

This paper requires you to analyze the significance of a textual echo that you find particularly interesting or important. Your task is to analyze how it serves the author's argument (what the author is saying or showing) about a particular keyword or intersection of keywords. In your analysis, think about the following questions: What evidence suggests that these details, passages, or moments are connected, and that we are meant to think of them in connection with each other? What is interesting or important about each of these details, passages, or moments—and what is interesting or important about their connection? How does seeing them as connected open up new ways to read them? In other words, how do their similarities and differences help us to understand their significance in and for the text? How does comparing these details, passages, or moments—and, especially, thinking about the movement and *change* from one to the next—serve to illuminate what the author is saying or showing about a particular keyword (or the relation between two keywords)?

This paper is neither a formal essay nor an open-ended free-write. You do <u>not</u> need to produce a logical, flowing argument. Your paragraphs do <u>not</u> need topic sentences. However, **you <u>do</u> need to frame your analysis using ONE specific keyword or ONE intersection of keywords (e.g., "debt" and "memory"), and you should try to develop a thesis or claim, however tentative, about what the text is saying or showing by deploying the textual echo in the way it does**. Ideally, literature helps make us think in new ways about concepts, questions, and problems. In your paper, try to **show how the text enables us to think about your keyword or intersection of keywords *in a new way*,** or how it *advances our understanding of* that keyword or intersection of keywords.

<u>Specifics:</u>
1. When quoting a passage from a text, **always include a page reference** (and, in the case of poetry, line numbers). Do this by putting the page (or line) number in parentheses at the end of your sentence, after the final quotation mark and *before the period*. If the quotation comes in the middle of your sentence, put the reference at the end of the sentence. If it's obvious what text you're quoting from (as is likely to be the case in your keyword paper), you don't need to include the author or title.
2. Do the same whenever you refer to specific details, moments, or passages, even if you don't quote from the text.
3. Punctuate quotations correctly. Unless you've included a page reference, commas and periods always go INSIDE quotation marks.
4. **Avoid unnecessary plot summary**. Only include what is necessary to advance your analysis (that is, your insights, observations, claims, and argument).
5. Be sure to **identify the textual echo** that anchors your analysis. Use page numbers, if appropriate, to signal where in the text the two details, scenes, moments, or passages appear.
6. **Underline your main claim(s) about what the author is saying or showing about a central problem, question, or issue**—usually a sentence or two.
7. **Eliminate phrases such as "I feel" and "in my opinion."** Just state your case or make your analysis.

In this assignment sheet for a literature course, students receive guidance for their close reading of a passage as well as clear instructions about structuring their essay. This sample also shows how instructors design grading criteria that helps students know what to prioritize in their essay writing.

Provided by Melissa Azari, Megan Kennedy, and Zachary Rewinski on behalf of Slavic graduate students at UW-Madison Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic

CLOSE READING OF A PASSAGE IN LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

Course: Literature in Translation 201 and 203 (19^{th}- and 20^{th}-Century Russian Literature in Translation

Length: 500-750 words, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman font, stapled.

Due date: Tuesday, September 29 in class

Assignment: Discuss any ONE of the passages from *Eugene Onegin* listed below:

- Chapter 1, stanzas 45-51 **and** Chapter 2, 13-17
- Chapter 1, stanzas 8-12 **and** Chapter 2, stanzas 7-8, 20-22
- Chapter 3, stanzas 6-10, 21-25
- Chapter 6, stanzas 26-35
- Chapter 3, "Tatyana's Letter" **and** Chapter 8, "Onegin's Letter"
- Chapter 4, stanzas 12-16 **and** Chapter 8, stanzas 42-47

As you prepare to write, treat the passage(s) as a complete, stand-alone text. Read it through a few times, concentrating on all its details. Assume that everything is significant. Look up any words you don't know. Write down or underline all the details that jump out at you: time, setting, characters, themes, oppositions, etc. Identify and analyze any stylistic elements and literary devices present in the passage. Refer to the literary terms glossary assignment (of course, not all of the devices in that assignment will appear in your passages – focus on the ones that do!).

Next, still before you start writing, consider the role this passage plays in the overall structure and/or meaning of the text: What purpose does it serve? How does it provide insight into the larger text? Does it foreshadow later events? Refer back to earlier ones? Does it provide us with a "key" to the rest of the work? Answering these questions will help you to formulate a good thesis statement.

Finally, try to organize your observations from the above into a focused argument, or thesis. You will need to focus on relevant observations/details that support your thesis, and leave others out. While you cannot talk about everything and there is no one "right" answer, be sure to address the points that best support your argument. You may want to address any passages that could provoke a counter-argument as well.

Do not *retell* the story; *analyze* the text. Keep your audience in mind! Assume your readers have read the book and know who Pushkin is. Show them something about the work that they may not necessarily have seen for themselves.

NB *For the purposes of this assignment, please use this modified form of parenthetical citation style for all direct quotations:* (I.50.1), *with the Roman numeral representing a chapter and the Arabic numerals referring to a particular stanza, then line. Because outside sources neither necessary nor desirable for this assignment, a separate bibliography is not required.*

GUIDELINES FOR STRUCTURING YOUR ESSAY

TITLE: Come up with a descriptive title (i.e., not just "A Close Reading of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*"). This may be easier to do once you've finished drafting your essay.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Refer to the passage(s) you'll be discussing, and briefly situate it/them in the work as a whole.

2. Thesis statement: what do you intend to prove? Be specific! It's not enough to say, "This passage shows characterization." Instead, say something like, "In this passage, Olga is characterized as pretty but dull."

3. Supporting details: How do you intend to prove your thesis? What details do you intend to focus on?

Close Reading of a Passage or Passages, continued.

THE BODY:

1. Each paragraph in the body of your essay should focus on one particular idea, theme or stylistic element. In the body of your essay, you want to expand on the supporting details (see above) you bring up in your introduction.

2. Be sure to use textual details and quotes to back up your ideas! Quotations are evidence for your thesis. While it is important to present evidence, it is equally important to avoid relying too much on quotations. Only include what is most important for supporting your argument. See the bottom of the other side of the page for how to format quotations in this essay.

3. The order of the supporting details you present does not necessarily need to follow the order in which they appear in the passage(s). Instead, structure your evidence based on how it relates to your central argument.

4. Most importantly, in the body of the essay, **stay within the given passage(s)** – try not to stray too far into the rest of the text. Try to treat the passage under consideration as a text unto itself. You can use the conclusion to discuss the role the passage(s) play in the novel as a whole.

CONCLUSION:

1. Summarize your argument and how you defended it. Don't simply restate what you've already written, though!

2. Try to relate the passage and your interpretation of it to the rest of the work: how does your reading of this part illuminate the whole?

Grading Rubric for "Paper #1: Close Reading"

Ideas and Methodology (30 points) - makes argument about text/passage - supports it with material from the text - originality of argument and its development - focus on text rather than author's intentions - treatment of text as a world onto itself (no attempt to extract "lessons" for the benefit of your reader)	
Organization (20 points) - engaging introduction that provides direction - focused thesis, stated early in paper - logical ordering of ideas (and supporting points) - unity and coherence of paragraphs - conclusion that recaps and goes beyond	
Style and Mechanics (20 points) - solid grammar (agreement, parallel construction, correct case, complete and non-fused sentences) - variety in sentence structure and in vocabulary - concise and appropriate wording - appropriate use of tense (usually present) - standard spelling, punctuation, capitalization	
Textual support (20 points) - thesis/argument is supported/developed (by reference to the text) - quotations neither too much nor too little - absence of unsupported generalizations	
Originality (10 points) - ideas or evidence not discussed much in class - creativity of presentation (a striking analogy, an interesting framework, a judicious use of humor, etc.)	

Total points for Paper 1: ________________

Comments:

Professor J.R. Walker has students demonstrate their understanding of complex course concepts through a series of challenging short writing assignments. By highlighting the importance of drafting, he teaches students about the writing process.

Professor J.R. Walker
Economics 450

BUILDING PROCESS INTO SHORT ASSIGNMENTS IN ECONOMICS

Economics 450: Wages and the Labor Market

Writing Assignment #2

In 300 words or less, please answer the following question:

> Under what conditions does technological change reduce the demand for labor?

Instructions:

Assume that technological change reduces the relative price of capital (i.e., new machines can produce more output for a given amount of labor). Please explicitly state your assumptions.

In the upper right hand corner of the first page please report the number of words in your answer. Answers with more than 300 words will receive reduced credit. Answers not reporting a word count will not be accepted.

Two copies of your answer (typed) are due at the beginning of class, Tuesday, October 2nd. Also please submit in a business envelope (or other secure device) all drafts and notes made while working on this assignment (may be handwritten). These materials will not be graded, but will help me in following your line of thought. I will return a copy of your answer and the supplementary materials to you. I will keep the other copy for my files.

Hints:

1. I strongly encourage you to read pages 216–218, “Empirical Evidence: Productivity Growth and Employment in Agriculture and Telephone Communication,” of the course textbook.

2. One draft is two drafts too few for me.

The following example from Professor Pandey's course ("The Romans") asks students to revise and/or expand on an earlier writing assignment in the course. In doing so, they are required to seek out additional primary and secondary sources, and Pandey provides guiding questions students should consider during their research.

Professor Nandini Pandey
Classics 322 (The Romans)

A Research-Driven Writing Assignment in a Classics Course

FINAL *RESCRIPTIO* of *Scriptio* #1: EXCAVATING THE OTHER IN ANCIENT ROME

8-page essay to be submitted as a Word file on Canvas.

Our understanding of ancient Rome often focuses on the experiences and concerns of a small group of elite male sources. **But what was life like for the vast majority of people who did not get to speak for themselves within the written record? Did they gain in quality of life or social/political/economic opportunities over the long course of Roman history?**

This will be a substantial revision and expansion of your first *Scriptio* (though you may modify your topic in consultation with your TA). Pick ONE marginalized group (women; slaves; non-Romans, i.e. people without Roman citizenship at the time a source was composed; the illiterate; non-elite soldiers). Show, in specific, original, well-informed, and well-evidenced terms, how members of this group are depicted in TWO different primary (ancient) sources we have read for this class. Then discuss what we can and can't learn from these sources; how they measure up against historical information; and whether/how this group's status or quality of life changed over the period you are discussing.

For each primary (literary) source you choose, think about the following questions (though you do not necessarily have to address them all in your essay).

What was life like for members of this group, according to this source?

How does this group's identity and social role seem to be defined? Who defines it?

What kind of social/political/economic power does your group have, and NOT have, as depicted in this source?

You might choose to focus on one or two characters per source to narrow down your task. If so, is this person representative of a group, or an outlier in some way? (Keep in mind how this might affect what you can say.)

When, why, and for what purpose was your source written? What biases, motives, or philosophies may inform the way it portrays members of this group?

How can you use your source as a historical document? How might it be inaccurate?

Does this work count as a source for the period when it was written, or for the period it depicts? (For example, does Livy's depiction of women in Book 1 reflect his own times, ancient history, neither, or some combination of both?)

If this source is a work of fiction, what can (and can't) it tell us about Roman realities? How might its genre (e.g. epic, satire, letter) affect its portrayal of this group?

You will need to use **at least 3 scholarly (secondary) resources**, identified with the help of your Library Information Session, in order to address these subjects adequately. Of these, you should have 1 secondary source about each primary text. You will also need 1 secondary historical source about the status of your chosen group within Roman history. (You are welcome to pick one with an archaeological, economic, legal, or social slant.) I will post a few suggestions online, but part of the point of this activity is to get you to find and evaluate sources for yourself.

<u>Topic and Bibliography</u> due according to the deadlines and guidelines set by your TA
Please submit to your TA a statement of your intended topic (e.g. a 'vision' or draft thesis statement), including your chosen marginalized group, the two primary sources you intend to study, and the character(s) or scenes that you will focus on. You should include a bibliography of 3 secondary sources with brief notes (1-2 sentences each) on how it will help your inquiry. Your TA may additionally request a brief outline. The more preparation you put into this paper at this early stage, the more your TA can help you improve the final product.

In-Person Meeting with TA: by appointment, scheduled with your TA
Meet with your TA to discuss your general writing goals as well as your specific paper topic for the Rescriptio. Bring copies of your past writing assignments (Scriptiones #1 and #2 with comments) so you can work with your TA to improve your performance on the final paper. Your TA may ask you to fill out a brief self-evaluation of your writing prior to the meeting in order to make the session as focused and productive as possible.

Final Paper Structure:
Begin your essay with an introduction that clearly states your argument ('thesis statement') and provides a 'road map' to the structure of your paper, which you should outline carefully before writing. Organize the rest ('body') of the essay so it flows logically and all paragraphs relate to your main argument. **We suggest discussing your two primary sources in chronological order, taking into account the questions raised above, and then dedicating a final section to discussing these sources in light of the historical evidence that you researched independently**. Round out your argument with a conclusion that summarizes your argument with consideration of its wider significance (why does it matter?).

Throughout the paper, rather than try to cover any given source exhaustively, please focus on a few carefully chosen, specific passages or episodes. Do NOT waste space with excessive summary or long quotations. Instead, select the most convincing evidence and quote it judiciously in order to build your case. The best essays will be thoughtful about the questions listed above, think creatively about evidence and its limitations, and anticipate counterarguments.

Length, Format, and Late Policy:
This essay should be at least 8, and no more than 9 pages long, in 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, and should include your name and your TA's name at the top. You must submit it on Canvas by noon on May 11 as a Word file or, if you have any concerns about file format, a PDF. If you have any technical issues uploading your paper, please also email it as an attachment to your TA to make sure it arrives. Essays submitted after noon, or in file formats that are unreadable to your TA, will be penalized by an automatic loss of 25%. The paper will receive an automatic zero after 24 hours (noon on 12 May). Be sure to plan accordingly.

Citation:
Use in-line parenthetical citations to note the text, Coursepack page number, and, when available, line or paragraph number: e.g. (*Poenulus* p. 48 l. 53). You must cite any ideas that are not your own, including Potter's textbook (Potter p. 124), Dr. Pandey's lectures (class lecture, 1/21/17) or PowerPoints (PPT, Day 4). Use MLA style for in-line citations and include a bibliography of all your sources at the end. If you are ever in doubt, please consult your TA or the syllabus on plagiarism and how to avoid it.

For this assignment, students are asked to write and present a funeral oration, 'oratio,' for Rome based on their critical thinking about the course's readings. Professor Pandey provides clear instructions that reflect her expectations for this writing and speaking assignment.

Professor Nandini Pandey
Classics 322 (The Romans)

A Funeral Oration in a Classics Course

ORATIO #3

During the final week of classes, in place of your last section, you will deliver a **2-minute funeral oration for Ancient Rome**. This will be a chance for you to look back at what you learned from the course and think of what made Rome special within world history and culture. Traditionally, Roman funeral orations were a chance to praise the dead person and explain her special significance and lasting accomplishments (while reflecting well on the living speaker, too). In this case, you will offer praise, judgment, and/or commentary on Rome, as if she is a person who has passed away (or has she?). You can speak directly to an imaginary personification of Rome, or to your instructors and fellow students. Have fun and be creative with this assignment, and let your personality and unique perspective shine through!

For inspiration, you might think back on:

- Your first *oratio* on 'why ancient Rome matters (to you)' – what have you learned since then? Has your opinion changed?
- The funerary inscriptions we read and Polybius' account of Roman funerals
- Your own and your fellow students' forum posts (on Canvas)
- The recent readings on Perpetua's passion and Marcus Aurelius' Stoic thought – does the ancient Roman experience give *you* a wider perspective on the modern world, or give you anything to meditate on as you live your life?
- anything we learned, read, or discussed in lecture or section that surprised you or spoke to you in some way

Your *oratio* must be between **90-150 seconds** (i.e., 2 minutes plus or minus half a minute). We will grade you only on your spoken words, not on any written material, so make sure you have outlined or written out your speech, practiced your delivery, and timed yourself. You are welcome to use a script or notes as you prefer; gestures, costumes, and/or props are encouraged but not necessary. The assignment is worth 2.5% of your final grade, from the Attendance & Participation portion of the breakdown.

Extra credit worth up to 20% of the assignment grade will be awarded to those students who deliver their *oratio* **live during the last lecture on Thursday, May 4**. If you want extra credit, please volunteer early in the class period to ensure you have time to speak.

Everyone who does not speak during lecture on May 4 will be required to submit a **video** of their oration **on Canvas by 5 pm on Friday, May 5.** Under 'Assignments,' select 'Oratio 3' (you may have to scroll down to 'Attendance and Participation'), and click on 'submit assignment' (https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/22734/assignments). Then click on the 'Media' tab and select 'record/upload media' (this requires use of your laptop camera and microphone). You can record yourself directly using this function, or if you prefer to use your cellphone or another program, you can upload that file here instead. Be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to (re)record yourself until you are happy with your performance and to upload your submission. Submissions up to 24 hours late will be docked by 25%; after that, they receive an automatic zero. Please email your TA immediately and attach your video if you experience any trouble with Canvas. These will not be viewable by anyone besides your TA and instructor.

We will grade this oration, as in the past, on **clarity, preparation, thoughtfulness, originality, and following the guidelines**. As per the academic honesty section of your course syllabus, this speech must be your own work; any plagiarism (even unintentional) will result in an automatic F. So be sure to distinguish your work from other students'. An 'A' oration, by contrast, will show originality and show that you really understood and reflected on the course as a whole.

Thank you for a great semester and we look forward to hearing your farewell to Rome!

For this final writing project, Professor Austerweil asks students to conduct an analysis of a societal/health issue and provide recommendations based on that analysis. Austerweil allows students to write a traditional paper or use another medium such as a brochure, website, or poster. The assignment sheet provides his expectations for scientific writing and his evaluation criteria.

Professor Joe Austerweil
Psychology 525**:** Cognition in Health and Society

A Final Writing Project in an Upper-Level Psychology Course

Task: The final project for the class is to conduct your own analysis of a societal/health issue and create a set of recommendations in some medium. The recommendations must be justified by evidence from peer-reviewed journal articles or book chapters, and the logic translating the published results to the recommendation must be communicated. The logic should convey the sociocognitive mechanisms by which the recommended intervention brings about the beneficial outcome. There should be at least three recommendations.

Audience: Your audience is an educated member of the Madison City Council (or Wisconsin State Government) that has commissioned you to create this product. She is not an expert in cognitive psychology, but is a former scientist. As such, she'll want you to support your the recommendations with scientific evidence/logic. You must defend your recommendations with empirical support, laying out in detail how it specifically supports the particular recommendation.

Medium: The medium is open-ended. This includes a traditional paper, a brochure/booklet (similar to what someone might find in a doctor's office), a poster, website or a video. You will have the same rubric regardless of the medium you use.

> *Paper:* If you choose to do a paper, it should be five pages single-spaced (at least 1" margins and 11pt font). The references may go over onto a sixth page. Using less than the five pages is fine as long as you still complete the task (in fact, concise is better).
>
> *Other:* If you choose to use a different medium, she expects it to be clear enough to inform any intelligent member of the public. It may be difficult to be clear to a layperson and defend your recommendations at the same time as laying out in detail how empirical research specifically supports each particular recommendation. In this case, you are encouraged to submit a 1-page paper (at least 1" margins 11pt font single-spaced) that provides the logic of how your recommendations are supported by empirical research.

In either case, please submit your materials through Canvas. Please do not include a title page (though your project should have a title).

***Advice on scientific writing*:** Remain focused and brief. Don't pad. Find everything you'd like to say and then cut half of it out. Every sentence should concern the thesis that you're arguing for. If a paragraph or sentence or phrase or word could be removed without affecting the strength or flow of your argument, then remove it. Do your own research. Start with the class readings and the textbook, make use of me or your TA, and go to the library or writing center. Don't feel you have to look at everything that's been written on the topic, but your paper should reflect a thorough understanding of the major concerns in the literature. Don't describe experimental results in full detail. Make clear what the nature of the experimental manipulation was and include the results relevant to your argument. Please do not use the word "prove" or "proof" unless it is the sense of a formal logic or mathematical proof.

I highly encourage using the different writing and research support centers on campus. For example, the Writing Center (http://writing.wisc.edu/) and the library http://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/c.php?g=178176.

Any quotes of more than a word or two from other people's work should be so indicated and fully referenced. (You are discouraged from using long block quotes – you are being graded on your writing, not the quality of quotes you include in the paper). Any ideas that are derived from other people's work should be referenced. Note this includes your own work. Self-plagiarism is still plagiarism, you may not submit the same work to this course that you previously submitted to a different course without prior approval from Professor Austerweil. You're encouraged to make full use of other people's efforts, just be clear that you're doing so.

Late policy: Late assignments will be penalized for every 12 hours that it is late and with an escalating and cumulative penalty (which starts at 1 of the 25 points). So, you lose 1 point for turning in the paper within 12 hours of the deadline, you lose 3 points (1 for first 24 hours + 2 for second 24 hours) for within 24 hours, you lose 6 points for within 36 hours (1+2+3). Incompletes will be granted in exceptional circumstances. Please contact Professor Austerweil as soon as possible if you would like to take this option. If you ask after the due date and your request is granted, you will have a late penalty.

***Cheating/Plagiarism policy*:** Plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), cheating, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Any of the above will result in a grade of 0 on the assignment, could also affect your final grade in the course, and is likely to be reported to the administration.

Rubric.

Name:				Your Score
General Clarity (5pts)	5 *to* 4	3.99 *to* 2	1.99 *to* 0	
Is clear, concise, and strong Focused and organized Flows well *For writing:* grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. *For graphical*: clean design, appropriate alignment, grouping, and spacing *For audio(visual)*: appropriate pacing, voice speed, and fluency	Meets most to all criteria at a high level	Meets some, but not all criteria at average level	Meets few criteria at high level. Most are poorly met or not met at all.	
Issue and Recommendation Descriptions (5pts)	5 *to* 4	3.99 *to* 2	1.99 *to* 0	
Clearly stated Issue is appropriate At least three recs Sensible and impactful	Meets most to all criteria at a high level	Meets some, but not all criteria at average level	Meets few criteria at high level. Most are poorly met or not met at all.	
Recommendation Justifications (7.5pts)	7.5 *to* 6	5.99 *to* 3	2.99 *to* 0	
Logic is clear, convincing, and flows well Support is appropriate Well reasoned	Meets most to all criteria at a high level	Meets some, but not all criteria at average level	Meets few criteria at high level. Most are poorly met or not met at all.	
Effectiveness (5pts)	5 *to* 4	3.99 *to* 2	1.99 *to* 0	
Balances scientific ideals with reality Practical recommendations Innovative and creative use of media Motivates audience to act	Meets most to all criteria at a high level	Meets some, but not all criteria at average level	Meets few criteria at high level. Most are poorly met or not met at all.	
Requirements (2.5pts)	2.5 *to* 1.75	1.74 *to* 1	0.99 *to* 0	
Follows APA formatting Within page guidelines	Meets most to all criteria at a high level	Meets some, but not all criteria at average level	Meets few criteria at high level. Most are poorly met or not met at all.	
			Total	

For these four mini-projects in Psychology 525, students apply what they have learned from course material to make scientifically informed arguments, suggestions, and recommendations about various real-world problems related to cognition. The instructor provides a clear description of each task and additional resources for completing the assignment.

Professor Joe Asterweil
Psychology 525**:** Cognition in Health and Society

MINI-PROJECTS IN AN UPPER-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY COURSE

Mini-Project 1

Task: Create a flyer or poster that communicates three recommendations for cell-phone usage while walking based on what you learned from class (and extra readings if you want). This is not an abstract issue: there are cities banning cell phone usage while crossing streets (e.g., Honolulu, HI: https://www.npr.org/2017/10/25/560089121/distracted-walking-law-bans-texting-while-crossing-streets-in-honolulu) or using installing new safety technology (e.g., LED strips in Bodegraven Netherlands: http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-38992653)

Each recommendation should be conveyed in an efficient and non-messy manner. With each recommendation should be an explanation of the scientific evidence for it. The explanation can be text and/or graphic.

Mini-Project 2

Task: Write a "mock" letter to a dean that makes two scientifically supported suggestions for improving student performance on tests.

Your letter should be 1-page, single-spaced, with at least 1" margins and a font size of 12.

Mini-Project 3

Task: Write a paper arguing for or against evidence gained from a police interview using what you have learned about testimony, confessions, memory recall, and other cognitive factors.

As discussed in the popular Netflix series *Making a Murderer*, Brendan Dassey (born in Manitowoc WI) was convicted and found guilty of serious crimes, including, but not limited to, first-degree murder. The case hinges on testimony from Dassey where he confessed to the crime. He later recants his confession, claiming (with his lawyers) that the confession was coerced.

Based on scientific evidence from the cognitive psychology literature, argue for or against that the confession should be taken as valid testimony (beyond a reasonable doubt). Although there are many other factors that might influence your judgment as to the appropriateness of the confession as evidence in court, please only consider factors related to course material. For example, one might argue that his low IQ would make him incapable of knowing the consequences of confessing to a crime – although broadly an appropriate argument, it would not be appropriate for the paper. However, this does not mean that any argument that appeals to his low IQ is inappropriate. If IQ interacts with some sociocognitive factor discussed or closely related to the course material, then that argument would be appropriate for this assignment.

Downloadable versions of each are available on the website. Here are youtube links:

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYOaIDxirHE
2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJt6j5E1y_s
3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-Y_CCkMv3Q

Please refer to three specific instances (with the clock time) during the interview as part of your paper.

Mini-Project 4

Goal: Analyze how choice presentation affects decision-making.

Tasks:

1. Create a map of how food are laid out at your dining hall (or favorite grocery store). Turn in the map write a paragraph analyzing the layout in terms of heuristics, biases, and nudging.

2. Rearrange the items in the map (a copy of the one from 1) such that people are most likely to make good decisions. Turn in the map and write a paragraph explaining what you mean by “good” and why the arrangement would facilitate good decisions using ideas from heuristics, biases, and nudging.

3. Rearrange the items in the map (a copy of the one from 1) such that people are most likely to make bad decisions. Turn in the map and write a paragraph explaining what you mean by “bad” and why the arrangement would facilitate good decisions using ideas from heuristics, biases, and nudging.

4. Make three general recommendations for dining hall (or grocery store) designers

5. Write one paragraph defending each recommendation using cognitive mechanisms and empirical evidence.

Professor Susan Cook provides graduate students with direction and guidelines for a written project in a 400-level course. Cook expects students to "take ownership" of their work and clarifies what types of projects she finds acceptable.

Professor Susan Cook
Music 416 (Survey of Music in the 20th Century)

GRADUATE STUDENT WRITING PROJECT FOR MUSIC 416

All graduate students must complete a 12-15 page written project in lieu of the final exam. (Undergraduate students may opt to do so as well with permission of the instructor.) You have agency over this project, and it may take a number of forms provided it intersects with course content and goals. You will meet with me to determine the best kind of project for your specific graduate needs. You will share their projects orally during the final exam time.

Some examples of projects include, but are not limited to:

- Substantive Concert Review
- Substantive Book Review of a publication appearing in the last 5 years
- An Annotated Bibliography of sources germane to a specific topic; annotations must be both descriptive and evaluative. [See the Writing Center's *The Writer's Handbook* for a description.}
- A State-of-the-Research Paper, similar to a annotated bibliography, but more discursive in presenting what work has been done on a particular topic and what research remains to be done
- A Reception History, explores how a specific work/composer has been "received" by audiences over time
- A Research paper on an original topic specific enough to be covered in depth in 12-15 pages.

For all projects, you must provide a bibliography listing all materials you consulted, including scores and recordings (not included in page count.) Endnotes and bibliography must be in a recognizable form (preferably *Chicago*/Turabian documentation style; please see the *Writer's Handbook* for clear, up-to-date information).

I will be looking for the overall quality of your project, both in choice of a topic of interest and value to you, how well you carry out the steps, especially the draft and its revision, and how convincingly you present your work to your peers. Attention to details is expected as well as adherence to correct citation form. I encourage you to work with me as well as with our Music Librarians as you identify your models, sources, etc.

Timeline for Major Research Project

1. Week of Feb. 12: Discussion of Options
You will schedule a time to meet with me to discuss your options and interests.

2. Feb. 22: Deadline for Choice of Project type and topic
You will share with me your best projections about the kind and scope of your project and why you've made this choice.

3. Feb. 27: Analytic Response to a Model
Depending on the type of project you choose, you will identify a possible model or example of a similar kind of project. In your response, summarize your model and identify what it does well, how it sheds light on contemporary musical life, what specific features you might emulate as well as how your project will be different. Some questions that might be useful: How does it bring in new ideas? Does it make a central claim? Does it answer "so what" and "who cares?"
What is it structured?

4. April 10: Project Draft due

5. April 17: Peer Review response due
Everyone will have the opportunity to read drafts of two other projects ideally of a similar type to the one you've chosen. You will provide specific feedback that both highlights the draft's strong points and provides specific recommendations for making the work stronger

6. May 8: Final Draft due and Oral Presentations

As we move through the steps, I'll share more information and context. You can always schedule additional times to meet to discuss particular aspects. Again, this is an opportunity for you to carry out work that matters to you.

To help students understand and enjoy classical Japanese poetry, Professor D'Etcheverry describes how she partnered with the School of Human Ecology and developed two innovative extra-credit assignments that give students "the chance to play by adapting court poetry to their own time and place." For each assignment, D'Etcheverry provides clear expectations about student writing.

Professor Charo D'Etcheverry, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures
Survey of Classical Japanese; Lovers, Warriors, and Monks

Two Extra-Credit Writing Assignments for East Asian 353 & Literature/Asian Languages and Culture 353

It's tough to get everyone excited about classical Japanese literature: too many descriptions of clothing and gradations of ink. This is a problem, because court poetry--which connects many genres in my field--references both texts and textiles frequently. Poets use patterns as metaphors for feelings, compare the depth of their passion to that of dyes, and show off by describing luxurious fabrics and colors. Help!

Enter the fabulous team at UW-Madison's School of Human Ecology (SoHE) —Sherry Harlacher, Natasha Thoreson, & their helpers—who spin stories about textiles, with real visuals, Q & A, and things to touch. I can't say enough about class visits to the lab and standing opportunities to write poems about objects in drawers has improved sensitivity to print descriptions. The SoHE team's presentations on specific techniques as well as themes in collecting have really opened my students' eyes to how material culture shapes ideas and their literary expression.

To build on these mandatory field-trips, by relating them more closely to Japanese texts, I've created paired extra-credit assignments. While I don't require students to complete them, many do—and not just for the points, as the high response-rate for this option attests. Instead, these assignments take advantage of both gorgeous objects and the chance to play by adapting court poetry to our own time and place.

As shown below, the first assignment asks students to write a short poem in English, demonstrating knowledge of a course text (*Tales of Ise*, about an amorous hero's varied relationships) as well as the rules of Japanese court verse. The second assignment responds to a classmate's poem, revisiting those rules and a point stressed in lecture: Japanese court poetry is a social art. We then discuss examples in class. That helps to build community early in the semester, a nice bonus. I have also found that these exercises allay anxiety about my mandatory writing assignments: close readings of actual court poems. Once you've written a couple yourself, deciphering them is not so intimidating. Students also realize that classical Japanese writers had fun, too. That makes for MUCH better close readings, and lots of laughs.

Assignment #1:

- *Choose <u>one</u> item in the drawers in the Lynn Mecklenburg Reading Room in SoHE that you think Narihira could put to good poetic use.*
- *Describe its <u>location</u> (left, middle, or right side; number of drawers down from top).*
- *Speaking <u>as Narihira</u>, compose an <u>English-language</u> waka (5 lines, 31 syllables) that expresses your feelings for Takaiko, your sister (episode 49), <u>or</u> the old woman (episode 63). Use the item from step 2 to make your point. Please make sure to specific who the poem is for somewhere in the assignment.*
- *Remember, the distribution of syllables in waka is 5-7-5-7-7 (beats per line, first through fifth). I can't wait to read what you come up with!*
- *Another reminder: the Reading Room's hours this semester are M-F 8:30am-4:30pm. You could even pop in (briefly) to look through the drawers before class!*

Assignment #2:

- *Choose someone else's poem from the first extra-credit exercise (see Canvas). Go to the Mecklenburg Reading Room in SoHE, look at the textile that your classmate used, and write a response to Narihira highlighting at least one new feature of the object to make your point.*
- *Remember to write as if you are the intended recipient (either Takaiko, Narihira's sister, or the old lady) of the first poem. How would she answer him? What feature(s) of the object can you use to make that point?*

In advanced undergraduate political science course, Professor John Zumbrunnen gives students the option of responding to one of two prompts. This assignment challenges students to explain a controversial issue or make an argument drawing upon important thinkers in American politics. Zumbrunnen not only provides students with helpful hints for writing successful essays, but also carefully ties the assignment to specific learning outcomes for the course.

Professor John Zumbrunnen
Political Science 566, Contemporary American Political Thought

AN ANALYTICAL ESSAY PROJECT IN A POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSE

The second individual project for PS 566 gives you another opportunity to analyze and evaluate course readings and bring them into contact with your own political thinking (working again on the "CREATE" learning objective for the course).
You will write an essay that responds to one of the following prompts:

1) Pick a significant political issue in the contemporary U.S. Explain the controversy surrounding this issue and take a stance on it, drawing on at least 1 thinker from the first half of PS 566 (i.e., before the first group presentations) and 2 thinkers from the second half of PS 566.

2) Identify a U.S. Presidential candidate for 2016 (this could be someone who is actually running or someone who we can realistically imagine running). Make an argument in support of this candidate. As you do so, analyze this candidate's political views and explain how they fit into contemporary American political thought, drawing on at least 1 thinker from the first half of PS 566 (i.e., before the first group presentations) and 2 thinkers from the second half of PS 566.

Essays must be no longer than 1500 words. Please include a word count at the end of the document. **Essays must be submitted to the "Individual Project 2" drop box on the course Learn@UW site by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, May 9.** Both Katelyn and I are happy to meet with you to talk about your ideas and arguments.

Statement of learning outcomes from course syllabus:

Students in PS 566 will:
- **KNOW** key ideas and arguments in contemporary American political thought.
- **ANALYZE** the relationship between contemporary American political thought and the American founding.
- **EVALUATE** recent political rhetoric in the context of contemporary American political thought.
- **CREATE** a rigorous account of their own political thinking in the context of key ideas and arguments in contemporary American political thought.

Some Hints on Writing Short Essays

1. **NARROW YOUR FOCUS**: The paper topics are, by design, quite broad and rather vague. This is to allow you to choose what you want to focus on and to take your paper in your own, unique direction. Be aware that you will not be able to talk about everything the topic might suggest in 1500 words.

2. **ANSWER THE QUESTION**: Having narrowed your focus, be sure that you are indeed still writing on the topic. Make sure that you take a clear stand on the issue at hand and that you state this directly near the beginning of your paper.

3. **QUESTION YOUR ANSWER:** Once you arrive at your answer, think about what someone on the other side of the issue might say in response to your claim. Clarify and complicate your answer to take such potential counterarguments into account.

4. **SUPPORT YOUR THESIS**: Having stated your position, make an argument to back it up. In doing so, draw on quotations from the relevant readings, citing them by work and page number (you should **not** use outside sources for these papers). Do not, however, rely solely on such quotations. Strike a balance between quotation or paraphrasing and your own interpretation and argument.

5. **INTEGRATE YOUR ARGUMENT**: Make sure your points flow smoothly one into the other as part of your overall argument. Check for smooth transitions between points. Do not allow your paper to become a string of unrelated or loosely connected ideas.

6. **REVISE AND PROOFREAD**: Remember that you must limit your essay to 1500 words. This means you will have to edit, cut and paste, decide what is most important and what can be left out. Use this process to strengthen your paper in terms of content and general readability. Do not simply begin writing and stop when you get to 1500 words!

Professor Caroline Druschke explains the purpose of an argumentative paper project in an English seminar. For the project, students select an issue related to water, decide some action to take on the issue, and reflect critically on their action. In the assignment sheet, Druschke outlines important deadlines in the writing process and articulates the qualities of a successful student paper.

Professor Caroline Druschke
English 245: Seminar in the Major, "Writing Rivers"

WRITING PROJECT TWO: ACTION PROJECT + RHETORICAL CRITIQUE OF APPLIED RHETORIC

45% of final grade; 10 pgs., double spaced, plus supplemental material

How do we work through the project?

Tuesday, September 26: Start Thinking

Thursday, October 12: Find Inspiration

Thursday, October 26: Pitch Your Idea

Week of Monday, November 6: Meet with Dr. Druschke

Thursday, November 9 through Thursday, November 30: Act!

Thursday, November 30: Submit Writing Fellow Draft

Tuesday, December 5: Lightning presentations

Thursday, December 7: In-class workshop

Thursday, December 7: CGD returns Writing Fellow Drafts

Thursday, December 7 through Wednesday, December 13: Meet with Writing Fellow

Monday, December 18 via email: Submit Final Draft!

What's the point of the project?
In lieu of a final exam, the culmination of this class is an action project and subsequent argumentative paper. This final action project is your chance to "give a shit about something": to find some way to engage in an activity you care about related to water that moves an audience to share your passion. The point here is not for you to satisfy Dr. Druschke with your action, but, instead, to find something that YOU can be passionate about, to take action on that passion, and to justify your choice. Your action should be consequential for an identified target audience and build from interdisciplinary perspectives. This action can be taken individually or in a group, but each student will write an individual final paper after the action is complete.

For your final paper, your job is to take a position related to the value—or lack thereof!—of doing this sort of applied, engaged work for rhetorical studies, English studies more broadly, or environmental activism. You should use your action project experience as evidence for an argument of your choosing. You might suggest, for instance, that a rhetorical approach enlivens environmental activism and public engagement (and offer details **from the literature** and **from your experience** about how and why), or claim that your action project experience deepened or complicated your understanding of the rhetorical theory we covered in the class (and explain how), or argue that this kind of action has no place in English studies.

My hope is that the action project experience is valuable to you, but I'm not going to dictate what conclusions you come to about the value of that experience in the context of your major.

This argumentative paper should use the tools of the course to critique your action project, and integrate that critique with the scholarly literature from the course to take a position about the role of engagement and action in rhetorical studies/English studies and of rhetorical studies/English studies in public engagement.

You should see this project and paper as the capstone of your work this semester, showcasing what you've learned about your discipline, about watershed science, about activism, and about yourself.

What should I write?
Your ten-page (double-spaced) analysis should:

- describe—IN DETAIL!—the preparation for, execution of, and consequences of your action
- analyze the action taken including a consideration of:
  - why this was the best possible action to take given the situation and any constraints (what other alternatives did you weigh? why did you choose this one?)
  - a description of the situation you were hoping to intervene in
  - the specific audience that you targeted and why this was the appropriate audience – what do they know about the issue? what do you know about them? how did you work to connect to them specifically?
  - the potential intended and unintended consequences of the action
  - the particular content, design, and delivery choices and their connections to desired consequences
  - HOW THIS ACTION EXEMPLIFIED THE LEARNING YOU DID IN THIS CLASS (THIS SHOULD BE THE MAJORITY OF YOUR PAPER!)
  - what the specific exigence was that you were reacting to and why you addressed this exigence in this particular way
  - how you assessed or evaluated the success of your action and how satisfied you are with the outcome
- attach documentation of the action (photos, outreach materials, lesson plans, etc.)

What will an "A" paper look like?

- Explain precisely why you chose the action, including an explanation of what was gained or lost through this choice. Why was this action appropriate to the issue, the exigence, the course, and the student? How did you prepare for potential intended or unintended consequences?
- Describe in specific detail the action taken and include (as an appendix) documentation of that action. Discuss why or why not this action achieved the desired outcome.
- Draw heavily from multiple course readings, including specific concepts, ideas, quotes, and theories. Students will use the course readings to complicate, clarify, or analyze their action, and use their action to test, complicate, or clarify course readings.
- Make a clear argument about what role the creation and execution of this action project—and, perhaps, of environmental advocacy more broadly—have in rhetorical studies/English studies –OR– what role rhetorical studies/English studies has in environmental advocacy.
- Be imaginative, lively, informative, and consequential.
- Be grammatically and syntactically flawless. **But seriously, do you have a detailed scoring rubric?** Yes! Check the new scoring rubric for more details on the evaluation of your final paper.

√ Learn about rhetorical studies, rivers, and dams.
√ Engage with Wisconsin's aquatic ecosystems and their humans.
√ Create original, coherent, and compelling arguments in text and in life that push beyond summary to analysis and independent and critical thinking.
√ Apply the tools of rhetoric to embrace risks, solve problems, and take action in the public sphere.
√ Partner with others to address timely problems and create positive community change.
√ Consider the role of environmental advocacy in the English major and the role of English in advocacy.
√ Give a shit about something! And act on that passion.

In this sequence of two writing assignments, Professor Hemant Shah helps his students think more critically about the cultural history and experiences of racial and ethnic minorities by exploring how these groups are portrayed in mainstream mass media.

Professor Hemant Shah
Journalism 662: Mass Media and Minorities

ANALYZING MULTICULTURALISM IN MASS MEDIA WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Writing Assignment 1: Concepts and History/Experiences (750-850 words)

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to move between levels of analysis. That is, while it is important to comprehend and even empathize with the emotional and poignant personal-level drama of displacement, discrimination, and prejudice, it is also important to understand what individual experiences represent conceptually. This is an assignment that helps assess analytical skill.

The first set of readings for class included five accounts describing the experience of being a racial or ethnic minority in the United States (the pieces by Bulosan, Baldwin, Rodríguez, Geronimo, and Bayoumi). Please think about what aspects of the experiences you found particularly moving or memorable. From among the five readings choose one phrase, anecdote, or passage from <u>two different readings</u> that provided some insight for you into how minorities view their social, political, or cultural position in a white-majority country.
In your paper:

1. Place your name, assignment number, section number, and word count at the upper right corner (single spaced); double-space your essay and use Times New Roman 12-point font throughout.
2. Provide the phrase, anecdote, or passage (included in total word count).
3. Explain how and/or why the phrase, anecdote, or passage is moving or memorable for you. Did it evoke childhood experiences? Have you been through something similar? Were you surprised by someone's actions or thoughts?
4. Explain how any of the concepts describing more general social, political, or cultural dimensions of race and race relations we have discussed in class, such as melting pot, diversity, ethnic pluralism, racial hierarchy, social construction of race, etc. (as discussed in, for example, WGC, Steinberg, Cornell & Hartmann, and/or in lecture) help you to connect and understand the *general* importance or significance of the *specific* experiences reflected in the phrases, anecdotes, or passages you selected. A majority of your paper should focus on these explanations. You will need link two different phrases, anecdotes, or passages to two different concepts.
5. Provide a bibliography (not part of word count) of all sources you consulted. You must consult at least one source outside of class materials, which should also be listed in your bibliography. Examples of outside sources include the following:
   - Ivan Hannaford (1996). *Race: The History of an Idea in the West*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
   - Mahmoud Mamdani (2004). *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Roots of Terror.* New York: Pantheon.
   - Michael Omi & Howard Winant (1994). *Racial Formation in the United States*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

Writing Assignment 2: Cross-Racial/Ethnic Representation in Film (750-850 words)

This assignment asks you to take a position on one side or the other of an on-going argument regarding casting choices in Hollywood films. Students should think carefully about where they stand and why. The assignment helps assess the ability to state a logical argument supported with reasonable evidence.

In the U.S. cinema, there is a long history of actors portraying people from another racial or ethnic group. Mainly, it has been whites playing non-whites, but there have been examples of members of one minority group portraying people from another minority group, and, rather infrequently, minorities portraying whites. This phenomenon of cross-racial/ethnic representation has generated a debate between those who say, "Actors shouldn't portray a person from another race/ethnic group" and those who say "It's perfectly acceptable for an actor to play a person from another race/ethnic group." Drawing on class readings, class discussions, and other materials, make a case supporting one side of this debate *and* refuting the other side of the argument.

You must consult at least one source outside of class materials, which should be listed in a bibliography of all sources you consulted. Examples of outside sources include the following:

- Robert Entman and Andrew Rojecki (2000). *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in Americ*a. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Darrell Y. Hamamoto (1994). *Monitored Peril: Asian Americans and the Politics of TV Representations*. Minneapolis; University of Minnesota Press.
- Eric Lott (1995). *Love & Theft: Black Face Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*. New York: Oxford.
- Paul Lester (Ed.) (1996). *Images That Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

These assignments from CA 345: Online Communication & Personal Relationships ask students to propose and conduct small-scale research projects to use as a framework for critically analyzing theories of relationship formation in online spaces.

Professor Catalina Toma
Communication Arts 345

USING LOW-STAKES RESEARCH PROJECTS TO CRITICALLY ANALYZE COURSE CONTENT

Assignment #1: Theories of relationship formation in reduced-cue online environments

In class, we have discussed four theories of how strangers form personal relationships in reduced-cue online environments (e.g., social presence theory, social information processing theory, social identity/deindividuation effects theory, and the hyperpersonal model). Choose two of these theories, describe them in detail, and identify similarities and differences between them. Then, propose an empirical study that tests an aspect of one of your chosen theory that was not discussed in class or in the readings. Use either Facebook or online dating as a context for your proposed study. Clearly state your hypothesis, and why it logically flows from your chosen theory. Then, briefly describe the study procedure (i.e., what will participants be asked to do? Will anything be manipulated? What will be measured and how?). Finally, identify the variables you will be testing and specify their nature (dependent/independent, categorical/continuous).

Grading rubric:
Describe theory #1……………………………20 pts
Describe theory #2……………………………20 pts
Similarities between theories……………..…15 pts
Differences between theories……………….15 pts
Proposed study
Description…………………………10 pts
Hypothesis………………………....10 pts
Variables……………………………10 pts
Total: 100 pts.

Formatting. Please format your paper in the American Psychological Association (6th Ed) style. You can find helpful information about APA here.
Please use (1) a separate title page; (2) 1-inch margins; (2) Times New Roman font, size 12; and (3) double-spacing throughout the manuscript.

Length. Your paper should NOT exceed 3 pages in length. We will not be reading beyond the third page. Please note that, while we value conciseness in writing, a paper that is shorter than 3 pages is unlikely to address the requirements of the assignment adequately.

Due date: Monday, July 22 at 10 am. Please submit your paper as a Word document using the Dropbox function on Learn@UW.

Assignment #2: Close relationships and media use

Choose one close relational partner (i.e., family member, close friend, romantic partner) and track your interactions with him/her during one full day. Use the attached questionnaire to record all your interactions with this person. Please submit the completed questionnaire along with your paper. Note that your questionnaire does NOT count towards the required paper length.

Analyze your responses. You do not have to calculate statistics (although you are welcome to do so if you wish). Simply "eyeballing" the data is sufficient. Which theories and concepts discussed in class are relevant to your experience? Why? Does your experience support the theories or not? Be sure to describe, in detail, the theories you are using, to connect your responses/data with the theories, and to argue persuasively why your own interaction patterns support or do not support the theories. Discuss at least two theories/concepts.

For instance, you may consider theories related to long-distance relationships, jealousy, Hyperpersonal model, etc. You may consider issues such as (1) how the level of intimacy you experience in your contact with your partner is affected by media use; (2) how the duration/quality of contact affects your overall feelings of intimacy/closeness with your partner; (3) how media multiplexity occurs in your relationship, etc.

Grading rubric:
Summarize your interaction data…………………………………………20 pts
Describe theories/concepts……………………………………………….30 pts
Connect your responses/data with the theories selected………………20 pts
Argue how your experience supports/ does not support the theories…30 pts
Total: 100 pts

Formatting. Please format your paper in the American Psychological Association (6th Ed) style. You can find helpful information about APA here.

Please use (1) a separate title page; (2) 1-inch margins; (2) Times New Roman font, size 12; and (3) double-spacing throughout the manuscript.

Length. Your paper should NOT exceed 3 pages in length. We will not be reading beyond the 3rd page. Please note that, while we value conciseness in writing, a paper that is shorter than 3 pages is unlikely to address the requirements of the assignment adequately.

Due date: Monday, August 5th at 10 am

Submission format. Please submit your paper as a Word document using the Dropbox function on Learn@UW.

Relational Questionnaire

1. Partner initials:
2. Type of relationship:
   a. Family
   b. Friendship
   c. Romantic
3. Generally speaking, how close/intimate do you feel with this person?

   1 (not at all)   2   3   4   5   6   7(extremely)
4. How long have you been in a relationship with this person? _________
1. On a weekly basis, which media do you use to communicate with your partner? Select all that apply.
   a. Telephone (i.e., voice calling)
   b. E-mail
   c. Texting (SMS/Blackberry message/iMessage)
   d. Instant messenger (including Facebook chat and text-only Skype chat)
   e. Video-conferencing
   f. Facebook (e.g., wall posts, comments, likes, photo sharing, tagging)
   g. Twitter
   h. Video Games (including console, phone and online games, but excluding Facebook games)
   i. Other ____________________
   j. None

Interaction Diary

Instructions: For every contact you have with this person during the diary day, answer the following questions.
By contact, we mean one face-to-face meeting, sending or receiving an email/text to this person, having an IM/Facebook chat with this person, looking at this person's Facebook profile, liking or commenting on this person's Facebook's profile, reading this person's Twitter, viewing this person's Instagram, etc.
CONTACT #1

1. In which media did the contact take place?
2. What did the contact involve? (e.g., phone convo, viewing Facebook profile)
3. Duration of contact: ______hrs; ______minutes
4. How would you characterize your contact with this person? (on a scale from 1 to 7)

    Relaxed (1) – Strained (7) _______

    Impersonal – Personal _________

    In-depth – Superficial __________

    Awkward – Comfortable _________

    No misunderstandings – A great deal of misunderstandings __________

    Free of conflict – Full of conflict ______________

    Satisfying – Not satisfying _____________

    Intimate – Not intimate ________

    Planned – Spontaneous _________

    Positive – Negative __________

5. Did this contact change your feelings about the relationship?
    a. Enhanced my positive feelings
    b. Enhanced my negative feelings
    c. No change
6. How positively do you view your partner at the end of this interaction?

    1(not at all) 2 3 4 5 6 7(extremely)

7. How negatively do you view your partner at the end of this interaction?

    1(not at all) 2 3 4 5 6 7(extremely)

This is an excellent example of a case study assignment in the social sciences. Assigned early on in the semester, the case study engages students in making connections between course readings and lecture and the case provided. With this writing assignment, students prepare to enter into field experiences of their own.

Professor Betty Kramer
Social Work 821

READING AND CASE STUDY ANALYSIS FOR SOCIAL WORK

The purpose of this initial assignment is to demonstrate your understanding of the readings and your ability to apply course content to the mental health challenges faced by an elder and their family.

Instructions:

1. Review lecture notes from Week 1 and all required readings for Week 1 and Week 2.
2. Read the attached case study.
3. Given what you have learned during our first class session and the Week 1 and 2 readings in a **4-5 page double-spaced** (12 pt. font; 1" margins) written report, **use the following headings** to concisely answer these questions:
    a. Preliminary Assessment (Suspicions): Given what Vanessa shares with you, what might you initially suspect is causing her mother's symptoms and why? Be specific and provide and cite evidence from the reading to support your preliminary assessment.
    b. Engagement & the Clinical Interview: You will need to do a home visit to initiate the assessment. What will you do in advance to prepare for the interview? How will you approach Mrs. Johnson? What will want to accomplish during this home visit?
    c. Assessment: Given the little bit of information Vanessa has given you, what else will you want to know and how will you obtain that information?
        i. Please list the various domains that you believe will be important to investigate as part of the assessment to determine the cause of Mrs. Johnson's symptoms and the most appropriate care plan. Be sure to list the mental status tests and medical tests that you feel should be completed (see Ch. 4 McKinnis, 2009; Ch. 6 in Zarit & Zarit). [Note: it is acceptable to provide bulleted list of points in response to these particular questions]
        ii. Describe how that data will be collected (and by whom)?
        iii. Provide a brief rationale for the assessment domains that will be included.
    d. Possible Recommendations: Assuming your preliminary assessment turns out to be correct, name 2-3 primary recommendations that you might make to Mrs. Johnson and her family?
4. Submit paper to Learn@UW dropobox by 9:00 a.m. before week 2 of class.

Grading Criteria		**Possible Score**	**Your Score**
I.	Provides reasonable preliminary assessment	2	______
II.			
III.	Draws upon course content to prepare for engagement	3	______
IV.			
V.	Demonstrates understanding of course content relevant to assessment domains with sound rationale	4	______
VI.	Recommendations appropriate to case example	3	______
VII.			
VIII.	Quality of Writing and organizational structure of paper Grammar, sentence structure, spelling	3	______
	TOTAL Score	15	______

(Case study reading included on next page.)

Daughter Requests Case Manager Consultation for her mother: Mrs. Johnson

Mrs. Johnson (Mrs. J.) is a 78-year-old, African American woman who lives in a small Midwestern city. About a year ago, her husband died suddenly of a stroke, leaving Mrs. J. to live alone in her home of 52 years. It was the home where she had raised her three children, all of whom graduated from college, have professional careers, and now live in other parts of the state. Her family is a source of pride, and her home has numerous pictures of her children and grandchildren.
About 3 months ago, Mrs. J.'s oldest daughter, Vanessa, got a call from one of the neighbors. Vanessa lives a 4-hour drive from her mother—a drive that can often be longer in bad weather. The neighbor stated that Mrs. J. had walked to the neighborhood store in her pajamas and slippers. Because Mrs. J. has lived in the community for several years, people have been watching out for her since her husband died, and someone gave her a ride back home. Mrs. J. doesn't drive, and the temperature was fairly chilly that day.

As a result of the call, Vanessa went to Mrs. J.'s home for a visit. Although she and her siblings had been calling Mrs. J. regularly, no one had been to the family home in about 7 months. Vanessa was shocked at what she saw. Mrs. J. had been a cook in a school cafeteria earlier in life and always kept her own kitchen spotless. But now the house was in disarray with several dirty pots and pans scattered throughout different rooms. In addition, odd things were in the refrigerator such as a light bulb and several pieces of mail. Many of the food products were out of date, and there was a foul smell in the kitchen. Trash covered the counters and floor.

Vanessa contacted her siblings to ask them if their mother had told any of them that she wasn't feeling well. Her brother, Anthony, remarked that their mother would often talk about Mr. J. in the present tense—but he thought that it was just her grief about his death. The younger brother, Darius, reported that his wife was typically the one who called their mother—about once a month. He didn't know if there had been any problems—his wife never said anything about it to him. Vanessa also contacted the pastor of her church, Rev. M. He stated that Mrs. J. had been walking to church on Sundays, as usual, but he did notice that she left early a few times and other times seemed to come to service late. But like the brother, Anthony, he thought that this behavior was probably a grief reaction to the loss of her husband.

A final shock to Vanessa was when she went through her mother's mail. There were several overdue bills and one urgent notice that the electricity was going to be cut off if the balance wasn't paid. She owed several hundred dollars in past due heating, electric, and telephone bills.

Vanessa contacted her mother's primary care physician (Dr. P.) who said that he had last seen Mrs. J. for her regular checkup 6 months earlier and that she had missed her last appointment a week ago. Dr. P. said that her staff had called to make another appointment but that her mother hadn't called them back yet. Mrs. J. is being treated with medication for arthritis, hypertension, and gastroesophogeal reflux (GERD). Her weight was stable, and her only complaint was some difficulty staying asleep at night. Dr. P. reported that her mother's mood was sad but had improved some in the month before the last visit. The doctor asked about memory and concentration, but her mother denied having any problems with memory.
Imagine that you a case manager at the local Senior Coalition. Vanessa is calling you to seek advice about what to do. She would like you to do an assessment to help her determine what is wrong and how she can best help her mother.

This assignment from Professor Betty Kramer requires Social Work graduate students to write questions, conduct an interview, and write a paper reflecting not only on the relationship of their interview to course content, but also what they learned about their own communication skills.

Professor Betty Kramer
Social Work 821

Interview with an Older Adult

The purpose of this assignment is to: a) provide an opportunity to practice evidence based communication skills for communicating with older adults; and b) enrich understanding of course content via a face-to-face interview with a selected elder.

The Task:

1. Select a topic relevant to the course objectives. Examples include:
   * experience of growing older and living with chronic physical or psychological challenges
   * effect of mental health issues on family caregivers, how they cope and what do they need
   * experience with seeking and receiving mental health treatment
   * factors contributing to psychological well-being in later life
   * experience with loss and bereavement in later life
2. Review course readings on the topic as relevant
3. Review Learn at UW documents relevant to communication including
   * Handout on “Communication Skills” (by Instructor)
   * Recommended reading “GSA-Evidence based Review of What Works for Communicating with Older Adults.”
4. Develop a list of “open-ended” questions that would allow you to carefully explore the selected topic.
5. Identify a person who is at least 60 years of age and willing to be interviewed.
6. Before beginning the interview, make a copy of the attached consent form. Review the form with the elder carefully explaining the purpose of the interview. One copy of the consent form is for your informant; keep the other copy and **attach it to the back of your paper.**
7. Conduct the interview, giving special attention to the course materials on communication skills.

In a **5 to 7 page typed** and **double-spaced paper** using APA format to cite your references, use the following headings:

a. **Topic Chosen**: Include: The course topic you chose to explore along with your rationale.
b. **Brief Description of Elder**: Include: Concise background info on elder including any demographic info you have (e.g., 89 year old white female), including how you know him/her.
c. **Concise Summary & Synthesis.** Include: Brief summary regarding what you learned during this interview, how it relates to course content or related literature, the implications for assessment or intervention, and how it expanded your understanding of this topic. This synthesis should include references to the academic literature and/or course content.
d. **Communication Skills Reflection**: Include: Brief description and critique of your use of the specific communication skills and approaches you employed referencing the course materials on communicating with older adults.
e. Attach to your report the following: **References** (citing relevant literature and course materials), **Consent form,** & **Appendix** (listing the open-ended questions you explored in your interview)**:**

	Grading Criteria	**Possible Score**	**Your Score**
I.	Organization of paper; insightful topic and Concise description of elder	5	______
II.	Concise summary & synthesis Thoughtful integration and application of course content Cites sources	10	______
III.	Communication skills reflection Insightful description and critique of skills; cites sources Makes good use of communication skills sources	7	______
IV.	Technical detail Spelling, grammar, syntax References and APA style	3	______
	TOTAL Score	25	______

Professor Lynn Nyhart's paper assignment is an excellent model of explicit guidelines for a formal, thesis-driven paper. Note that Nyhart specifies what the paper must accomplish (i.e., make an argument), but gives students choice about the form that the argument takes.

Professor Lynn Nyhart
History of Science 280: The Double Helix

EXPLICIT GUIDELINES FOR A FORMAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT IN HISTORY OF SCIENCE

FIRST PAPER ASSIGNMENT:
Polished draft due **Tuesday October 8** (bring three copies TO CLASS)
Final version due **Tuesday October 15**.

Assess the value of James Watson's *The Double Helix* for the historian of science. How useful is it as a document for giving us insight into the development of molecular biology (or insight into the scientific process in general in the early 1950s)? Some things you might want to consider in formulating your answer:

- How accurate is the document--to what degree should we trust it, and in what areas?
- How broad or narrow is its scope? What information is included; what information (or what kind of information) is left out that you think would be helpful or necessary to formulate a fuller picture of the history involved?
- What does it tell us about the conduct of science that is useful to know, and what might be lacking from other sorts of documents?
- What other sorts of documentation would you want to have access to, ideally, to gain a full picture of the early history of molecular biology?

You do not need to address all of these questions; you might want to address others as well/instead. These are just suggestions.

The essay should be about 1200-1500 words long (approx. 4-6 pages), and should make a coherent argument with a clear thesis statement that you support. (The argument itself may, of course, have multiple parts or sub-arguments.) However, we do not need to be rigid about the exact **form** of the argument. If you feel most comfortable writing a standard academic essay, you may do that. If you would rather imagine yourself offering advice to a friend, or a student, or someone else burning to know about the early history of molecular biology who has been told that *The Double Helix* is a good place to start, you may do that. You may even imagine yourself writing a didactic letter to the journal *Biology Teacher* or presenting a paper at the "International History, Philosophy, and Science Teaching Conference" (a real conference held every other year) advising non-historians of science of the pleasures and pitfalls of using this book to teach students about the history of molecular biology. In any of these cases, you would want to develop a clear thesis and argument, but you might couch them slightly differently in your introduction, and the overall tone might differ somewhat, depending on which approach you take. (BE SURE to be clear which approach you're doing!)

Please attach to your draft a *Cover Letter* for your readers that highlights where you especially want advice. Are you uncertain whether you have articulated your thesis clearly? Do you want them to pay special attention to the ways you support your argument? The relationship of your conclusion to the evidence? Your balance of different kinds of argumentation? Are you concerned that you are trying to cover too little? Too much? Are there other issues you want them to focus on? The more responsibility you take for guiding your reader-editors, the more likely you are to get truly useful feedback.

This overview shows how Professor Leonora Neville builds process into assignments and offers explicit criteria for two kinds of historical writing—a historical argument and an objective narrative for Wikipedia.

Professor Leonora Neville
History 313: Introduction to Byzantine History and Civilization

HISTORICAL ARGUMENTS AND WIKIPEDIA PARAGRAPHS IN BYZANTINE HISTORY

Goals for Student Learning

Historical Content:

- The basic outline of the events of the medieval Byzantine Empire
- Major cultural and political figures and events

Historical Method:

- What sources of information survive from the Byzantine Empire
- How we can use medieval sources to figure out what happened
- How the agendas of modern historians affect their presentation of the past
- How to conduct investigative research in primary sources and secondary scholarship

Practical Skills:

- Analytical reading
- Analytical writing
- Research
- Expository writing

Assessment

16% Discussion Participation. Assessed three times using the Participation Grading Criteria (5%, 5%, 6%)
24% Three Quizzes (8% each)
30% **Two** Historical Argument Papers based on primary source readings (15% each), graded using the Historical Argument Grading Criteria
30% Wikipedia Article Project, graded using the Objective Narrative Grading Criteria

Wikipedia Article Project:

One well-researched, entirely substantiated and accurate paragraph pertaining to a Byzantine topic to be posted on Wikipedia. This is an exercise in objective narrative exposition, broken down into the following phases:

4% Article Review: a review of an article in Wikipedia on a Byzantine topic using the Objective Narrative Grading Criteria. Due in Section Week 4
4% Topic Choice & Critique: a proposal for a paragraph you plan to write/rewrite explaining the problems with the existing one. Due in Section Week 6
4% Annotated Secondary Source Bibliography: Due in Section Week 7
4% Annotated Primary Source Bibliography: Due in Section Week 9
6% First Draft: Due in Section Week 11
8% Final Draft: Due in Section Week 15

Historical Argument Paper Grading Criteria
Characteristics of an **A** paper:
• It has a clear, well-articulated thesis in the first paragraph.
• The argument of the paper supports the thesis well and thoroughly.
• It amply fulfills the instructions of the paper assignment.
• It displays careful reading of the source material.
• It displays considered thought about the material.
• All claims are supported by citations and explanations of the textual evidence.
• It has excellent English grammar and usage.
• It has a well-organized structure.
• It has no proofreading errors.
• It has correct citations for all sources.

Objective Narrative Grading Criteria
Characteristics of an **A** paragraph:
• It is completely accurate.
• It is completely objective.
• All statements are verifiable and verified.
• All statements are supported by citations to recent scholarship.
• All pertinent primary sources are referenced.
• It has perfect English grammar and usage.
• It has a well-organized structure.
• It is elegantly written and interesting.
• It has no proofreading errors.
• It has correct format for citations for all sources

This assignment is the first analytical writing assignment from Professor Hennessy's History and Environmental Studies course with students from all levels of study. Students worked with writing fellows during the drafting process and included a cover letter in their final paper submission that reflected on their experience working with peer reviewers.

Professor Elizabeth Hennessy
History and Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

WRITING ASSIGNMENT IN HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES: ANIMALS MAKING HISTORY

Context: In Spring 2015, I taught a class on Animal Histories that was cross-listed in History (200) and Environmental Studies (404). This mid-semester assignment asked them to analyze course readings by writing a persuasive essay about how animals are important historical actors. The prompt draws from environmental historian J.R. McNeill's Mosquito Empires, which students read and discussed in class. The class included students in all four years from a variety of majors across L&S and CALS; for many, this was the first analytical writing assignment they had encountered. Working with undergraduate fellows from the Writing Center, the students learned to use secondary sources to make a nuanced argument about the nature of historical agency. Having students write a formal cover letter, based on a template I supplied, allowed them to reflect on their experience working with peer editors and also taught them professional norms of correspondence.

Assigned: March 24 (T)
Draft due: April 9 (R) (hardcopy)
Peer comments returned: April 16 (R)
Final due: April 28 (T) (11am, LearnUW Dropbox)

Prompt: In the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon, Karl Marx famously wrote that "Men [people] make their own history, but they do not make it under conditions of their own choosing." In Mosquito Empires, J.R. McNeill modifies this maxim to incorporate mosquitoes as historical actors. He writes, "Humankind and nature make their own history together, but neither can make it as they please" (2010, p. 6). Your task for this writing project is to use McNeill's reworking of Marx's famous maxim—or write your own version—as the basis for a persuasive essay of 1,250 to 1,500 words about the role of animals in making history. Use examples from three class readings to explain what this statement means and why McNeill's update (or your own) is necessary. You may also want to answer the following questions to help build your argument: How do animals make history? How are animal actors different from human actors? Why is it important to consider animals as historical actors?

Your audience for this essay is skeptical historians who are accustomed to thinking of humans as the quintessential historical actors; your job is to analyze examples from class readings to convince them that animals are also important historical actors. Rather than just retelling stories about particular historical events, you want to make an analytical argument for how and why animals have mattered historically. Be sure you have a clearly stated thesis and that you outline your argument in the introduction. Also be careful not to fall into a determinist argument; you want to pay careful attention to the nuances of how context shapes history. (For example, arguing that because spermaceti oil makes great candles there had to be a sperm whaling industry would be determinist. It's too simple a causal relationship and an argument that ignores a slew of contributing factors. Attention to the evolution of whale hunting and the changing context of industrial demand for whale oil would provide context and nuance to counter determinism.)

Be sure to include a title and byline (your name). Use the following convention to name your file: LASTNAME_Final_Paper2.docx

Writing Fellow Meeting: A polished draft of your paper is due at the beginning of class, in hard copy, Thursday, April 9. I will get these drafts to your peer editor, who will contact you to set up a meeting. On Thursday, April 16, I will return your drafts with peer editors' comments in class. After that, you will have a week to complete your peer meeting.

Cover Letter: To get credit for the draft (which I will not grade) and the peer meeting, you need to write a 1-page cover letter (single spaced, about 300 words, using professional letter template) explaining how you used (or not) your peer editor's suggestions and what you have learned through the writing and editing process. Turn this in with your final draft. Use the following convention to name your file: LASTNAME_CoverLetter2.docx

Details: Papers should be 1,250 to 1,500 words (4-5 double-spaced pages; 12pt Times New Roman; 1-inch margins). They should be polished according to Chicago Manual style. Include a properly formatted bibliography, using inline citations when you directly quote a source OR when you paraphrase an idea taken from another source. [I'll go over the formatting for this in class.]

Grading Rubric

A

- Fresh, creative, nuanced understanding of McNeill's maxim, or student's own update
- Clearly articulated analytical thesis statement
- 3 well-chosen examples convincingly illustrate thesis
- Effectively uses historical detail to make point
- Makes nuanced argument to avoid determinism
- Cover letter reflects thoughtful engagement with peer comments & reflections on the writing process
- Free of grammatical and punctuation errors
- Correctly formatted bibliography and citations

B

- Insightful understanding of McNeill's maxim, or student's own update
- Straightforward thesis statement, shows some analytical depth
- 3 examples adequately illustrate thesis
- Uses some historical detail to support main point
- Uses some detail to avoid determinism
- Cover letter demonstrates consideration of peer comments & writing process
- Few grammatical and/or punctuation errors
- Few formatting errors in bibliography and citations

C

- Satisfactory understanding of McNeill's maxim, or student's own update
- Thesis statement lacks analytical depth
- 3 examples related to thesis but do not strongly support
- Uses little detail to illustrate main point
- Lack of nuance leans toward deterministic argument
- Cover letter rushed, offers little reflection on editing process
- Some grammatical and/or punctuation errors
- Some formatting errors in bibliography and citations

D

- Unclear articulation of maxim, little evidence of understanding
- Thesis statement vague, unclear, or missing
- 3 examples poorly chosen
- Detail missing or detracts from story
- Argument deterministic
- Cover letter missing or does not reflect engagement with peer editor's comments
- Contains several grammatical and/or punctuation errors
- Contains several formatting errors

For this graduate course on statistical methods for clinical trials, Dr. Cook helps students deepen their understanding of key course concepts by writing brief summaries of published research articles. In their summaries, students analyze and describe key statistical elements within the article.

Dr. Thomas Cook
Department of Biostatistics and Medical Informatics

AN ARTICLE SUMMARY ASSIGNMENT IN STATISTICS 641

1. Read the article

MERIT-HF Study Group (1999). Effect of metoprolol CR/XL in chronic heart failure: Metoprolol CR/XL Randomised Intervention Trial in Congestive Heart Failure *The Lancet 353*, 2001–2007.

Write a brief summary (1–2 pages) of this article describing:

- Background (the problem, and why it is important)
- Study design
  - Population
  - Interventions
  - Treatment Assignment
  - Sample size
  - Outcome measures
  - Interim Monitoring (i.e., early stopping for benefit/harm)
  - Analysis

- Efficacy Results
  - Primary Outcome
  - Secondary Outcomes
  - Subgroups

Throughout the semester, Professor Sims assigns papers in which students take a position on the various arguments and theories addressed in his course. In writing these papers, students practice building informed arguments based on primary sources, course readings, and their learning throughout the semeste.. Below, you will also see Sims' learning goals and his approach to evaluation criteria.

Professor Revel Sims
Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture

POSITION PAPERS FOR CHICAN@ AND LATIN@ STUDIES 330

Three position papers will be assigned throughout the semester. The purpose of a position paper is to articulate an argument with supporting evidence. It describes a position as well as the rationale based on facts or information that provide a solid foundation for your argument. Position papers for this class are necessarily short and should be between <u>one and two, single-spaced pages of text</u>—excluding figures, references, or other additional material that may form part of your submission. Papers should follow standard formatting and referencing guidelines such as APA or Chicago—e.g., no more than 1" margins, Times New Roman 12-point font, etc. Papers must include the following two items:

1. An introduction containing a summary of the issue and relevant background information and a <u>clear</u> and <u>concise</u> statement of your argument/thesis.
2. Supporting documentation or evidence for your position.

Each position paper will account for 20 percent of your overall grade—totaling 60 percent.

<u>Position Paper #1</u>
The first section of the course explores the early development of whiteness and white supremacy in what has become the southern part of the United States. While certain features of race/racism/racialization that emerged from this period seem relatively constant, it is incorrect to assume that this particular system of white supremacy was inevitable. Recent scholarship on racialization during this period—some of which we will read in this class—attempts to trace the development and purpose of white supremacy in order inform our current understanding of the subject. In particular, three arguments have been made about whiteness and racialization that have been useful to scholars. These are:

- ***the class argument***—i.e., white supremacist racism developed as a means of maintaining ruling class domination;
- ***the gender argument***—i.e., white supremacist racism worked through gender and served to restrict certain sexual relationships in order to determine the position of children, inheritance, and political participation; and
- ***the independence of race argument***—i.e., white supremacist racism emerged from the specificity of European culture, history, and imaginations which often supersedes or displaces class or gender considerations.

The first position paper asks that students confront these arguments directly and create an informed argument based on evidence. In addition to the readings assigned for the class, students should reference primary sources as part of their paper. Three excellent sites for digital versions of important documents and information from the period are:

1. Digital History "Virginia Slave Laws"
   - http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=71
2. Virtual Jamestown "Selected Virginia Statutes relating to Slavery"
   - http://www.virtualjamestown.org/slavelink.html
3. Loving Day "Legal Map"
   - http://www.lovingday.org/legal-map
4. Africans in America PBS Resource Bank
   - http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/index.html

Learning Goals

1. Introduce students to highly structured, argumentative writing and expectations for further writing assignments in the class.
2. Engage with one of the principle constructs of race analysis.

<u>Position Paper #2</u>
Despite how it is often presented, theory is not an abstract exercise among academics within the "ivory tower." On the contrary, theory is often a popular practice that is crucial for not only understanding complex social phenomena, but also for engaging with and transforming phenomena. The second position paper asks that students chose one among the five theories of race covered in this class—i.e., ethnic assimilationism, the inner colonial model, structuralist and Marxian approaches, Critical Race Theory, and Omi and Winant's racial formation—and argue why they are useful/necessary for understanding a particular phenomenon of your choice that is relevant to whiteness. As clearly and succinctly as possible, the paper should summarize the theory and devote the majority of their paper toward describing how the approach explains—or fails to explain—the topic.

Students are encouraged to select a topic that they are knowledgeable about or are interested in. For example, some broad areas that students might draw from are: music, language, citizenship, social movements, education, etc. As a good, general rule of thumb, the more specific the issue the easier it will be to dissect it theoretically.

Learning Goals

1. Provide an opportunity for students to distill the major features of a particular theoretical approach to understanding race.
2. Reinforce the utility of theoretical thinking to everyday circumstances.

Position Paper #3

The final position paper for asks that students take a side on the central subject of the class—i.e., *whiteness* itself. Specifically, students should provide support for an argument about whether or not whiteness should be abolished? This paper demands that students draw from the span of the entire course—i.e., the history of whiteness, theories about race and racialization, and perspectives on white supremacy and privilege—in order to: (1) define the central tenants of whiteness as you understand them and (2) provide a rationale for why or why not whiteness should be abolished. Students can choose another topic for this position paper if they like but must run it by me first.

Learning Goals

1. Summarize the main features of whiteness and white supremacy.
2. Expose students to the difficulty of anti-racist praxis through engagement with transformative thinking.

Professor Sims' Approach to Evaluation

To each student I send an email with a short standard note and the following info.

Argument: [reproduce a summary of student's argument in order to share a reader's perspective]

Strengths: [highlight main strengths of the paper--e.g., clarity, argument, etc.]

Things to consider: [highlight paper's weaknesses, things that were absent that would have strengthened the paper, errors that detracted from the work, and/or observations about how their work fits within the literature.]

Grade: [xx/20]

This Biocore assignment encourages collaborative learning by putting students in teams and using peer review to evaluate final products. The result is a discipline-specific research project that incorporates both written and oral communication skills.

Dr. Michelle Harris
Dr. Janet Batzli
Biocore Program

TEAM POSTER PROJECTS IN BIOCORE

Posters are large pieces of paper or cardboard which carry text and figures and concisely present ideas or the results and conclusions of experiments. Poster sessions are common at scientific meetings and are one of the ways in which scientists share information with each other. In Biocore we make use of posters as **formal presentations** that replace lab reports or papers. This section focuses on formal posters, such as you would present at a scientific meeting. Before preparing your own poster, observe some made by biologists on this campus by going to any building where biological research is going on such as those displayed in the corridors of the Zoology Research Building.

Developing a poster is quite different from writing a paper or creating a PowerPoint presentation. Team members must **work together** on the poster so that it tells a unified story. It is important to make posters **easy to read and visually appealing**. During a scientific meeting, there may be as many as 200 of these in a room, and you do not want your poster to be ignored. Use lettering which is at least **1/4 inch** high (larger for titles) so that the information can be read easily from at least **five feet away**. Although the poster should be visually appealing, don't get carried away with this - put your efforts into **substance over form**. In evaluating the posters, we pay much more attention to the poster's scientific soundness and ability to tell an integrated story than we do to its glitz.

Include the following components in your posters:

An informative title: Gives the reader some idea of your experimental system stating the **organism** (or general system) you are studying, the **independent variable** you studied, and the **direction of your results**.

The names of the authors in alphabetical order: Order of authors' names generally indicates the researchers' level of involvement in the study. However, we expect all group members to have **equal involvement** in the study and preparation of the poster; therefore, authors should be listed without indication of hierarchy, in alphabetical order.

The department and institution where the work took place: In this case, Biology Core Curriculum, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Abstract: <200 words (FYI: Abstracts are usually submitted ahead of time to the organizers of a meeting, who decide which posters will be accepted for presentation.)

Introduction: Be *brief*, but include the following:

- **Question:** What question did you address with your experiment?
- **Background:** key issues, concepts, or terminology needed to understand the reason for the experiment.
- **Biological rationale:** This provides the logical, biological reason for doing the experiment and why you believe your hypothesis to be true. This is NOT a social justification. Remember your audience: gear your poster to classmates in your lab section.
- **Hypothesis:** It is of particular importance that you define and present a clear hypothesis that is testable given your experimental design. In general, your hypothesis should indicate your independent variable (what you are manipulating), your dependent variable (what you are measuring), your study organism or system, and the direction or trajectory of your predicted result(s).

Methods: There is not room for a lot of details, but you should give your readers enough information so that they can **evaluate your claims**—not necessarily repeat your experiment. We strongly recommend using a **chart or annotated diagram** to convey your experimental design, sequence of events and tools.

Results: Briefly state your results, referring to a series of figures/graphs displaying your data. (It is acceptable to use bullets for this.) It usually is easier to get your ideas across with figures, especially for a poster, but tables are appropriate in some cases. Use large font for your axes and numbers. Include data from your controls. Figures and tables need legends which are often more lengthy than in a paper since you are trying to tell your story with graphics. It is appropriate to use **titles** to label your tables and figures.

Discussion and Conclusions: Your discussion should clearly **restate your hypothesis** and state whether you **support or reject** it with supporting evidence from your results. Avoid over interpretation (particularly if your design or protocol had weaknesses or suffered from excessive experimental error) and stick to what you can or cannot say about the system given your data. If your data supported your hypothesis, connect your final conclusion with the problem and biological assumptions embedded within the biological rationale presented in the Introduction. If your data did not support your hypothesis, describe how any erroneous biological assumptions you made would explain your alternative results. If possible, briefly describe literature that would help explain your alternative results.

Literature Cited: Follow guidelines in this manual. Numerical citations or parenthetical citation format within the text are both acceptable for posters.

In this introductory literature course, Professor Ramzi Fawaz assigns a group essay that maximizes students' freedom to choose a topic of interest relevant to the course, while providing guidance about the required components of the essay. He offers some options for the group writing process and explains how students will be evaluated as a group.

Professor Ramzi Fawaz
English 177: American Fantasy

COLLABORATIVE ESSAY ASSIGNMENT IN A LITERATURE COURSE

For this final paper, you will write a ten-page collaborative essay with your group members analyzing a single cultural object (movie, book, or graphic fiction) that we have not discussed in class. I have included a list of possible texts to study below and only one group will be allowed to analyze each option. You may approach the text you choose from any scholarly angle and focus on any aspect of the text as long as it relates to the key themes of this course and has something to do with fantasy. The essay must also include the following three components:

1. A historical assessment of the text at hand (the historical context in which it was made and/or discussion of the historical moment the text is set in).
2. An extended analysis of the text itself that uses the historical context and outside scholarly sources to unpack its content.
3. At least two scholarly sources (one from our class and one that you find on your own) that you use to analyze the text.

You should not approach these three components as a list or an organizing structure for the paper. Rather, they should all be synthetically woven together. You will need to find scholarship that helps you situate the text in its historical moment as well as an outside scholarly source that is more theoretical or conceptual. You will develop this paper in parts. Your group will start by developing a short proposal describing your projected argument and plan for organizing and executing the paper; your group will then produce a five-page rough draft version of the longer paper; finally, you will complete and submit the final paper. The due dates of these various components will be decided by your TA. This is not a traditional research paper, which means you do not need to conduct extensive outside research on the text beyond what is being asked here.

All members of the group will receive the same grade, meaning that you must all equally contribute to the completion of the paper. You must decide amongst yourselves who will do what (or else equally engage in all activities simultaneously). Collaborative writing comes in many forms; you may all wish to write different portions of the paper on your own and then synthesize them. Alternately, you may wish to write it up together. There are many options and it is up to you to delegate responsibilities. When you turn in the final paper, you will also turn in a self- AND peer-assessment statement where you will discuss what you contributed to the paper, what you think you did best (and what you could continue to work on), and how you think your peers did in contributing to the project.

In this assignment, instructor Susy Ziegler explains the process and requirements for a collaborative paper. She suggests that each group member be responsible for one part of the paper and that all group members work together to compose the introduction.

Susy Ziegler
Geography 365

A Collaborative Paper in Geography

During our field trip on Thursday, September 21, we will locate six different places on or near the UW campus. Each group of three students will study one of these places throughout the semester from as many geographic perspectives as possible. You will first identify the various *geographic realms* at your site; consider the natural as well as the cultural attributes. To do so, you will find it helpful to look at your study site from the viewpoints of as many different types of geographies as possible (e.g., biogeography, cartography, climatology, economic geography, geomorphology, historical geography, population geography, geography of recreation, tourism and sport, regional development and planning, remote sensing, transportation geography, urban geography, etc.).

As you are working on your projects, think about what you have learned from the readings for this course: What do geographers do? What kinds of questions do they ask? What techniques do they use to answer questions? You will then use these approaches to find out more about your study area.

I expect these projects to represent substantial effort on each of your parts, and I will be reading your work for both content and technical aspects. I have not set a minimum or maximum number of pages for your final document, but I offer possible page lengths below. A general guideline is to be as thorough yet concise as possible. Bring questions and comments about the project to me as they arise. You will work toward your final group project in stages:

Step 1, due 5 October: a description of what geographic realms you will study (1-2 pages). In the description you submit as a group, highlight the perspectives that you will take and why you have chosen them. Indicate what geographical questions you wish to answer and *how* you plan to do so (your methods). Also describe *who* in your group will research each perspective and *when* you will meet as a group to consult, compile, and complete each part of the assignment (your timetable).

Step 2, due 19 October: an annotated bibliography of the references that you are using to answer your geographical questions (five sources per student, 3-4 pages total). An annotated bibliography is a list of sources—using the notation I will describe in class—with a few summary sentences about each source. We will discuss an example during class. Each student is responsible for at least five sources, and you will put your references together into a bibliography for the group.

Step 3, due 16 November: draft of group project, including introduction written by group (1-2 pages) and individually written sections (10 pages each). Although I expect that much of the work that you turn in as your draft will be text, I encourage you to be creative in the types of material that you incorporate and the ways in which you present your findings (e.g., maps, photos, graphs, etc.). In your group introduction, clearly define the focus of your group project and map out for the reader the individually written parts. Make sure that each of your individual sections contains a brief introduction that outlines the topics you will discuss and a more extensive conclusion section that discusses how your part relates to the project as a whole and to the larger themes in geography that we have read about and discussed this semester. I am looking for specific links to the readings, i.e., properly cited quotations and paraphrases that support your conclusions. Make sure that you end your sections with your own bibliography. I will return these drafts after Thanksgiving for you to revise with your group.

Step 4, due either 7 or 14 December: a detailed presentation of your particular area (10 minutes per group member). Think carefully about what is important to say to the class about your project. Most of you will not have time to share all of your research findings, so pick out the essential facts pertaining to your site. Visual aids such as overheads, blackboard outlines, and videos will be especially effective. The first person to present in a group should outline the various sections to follow, and each member should introduce and outline his/her section. Practice your presentation beforehand to ensure that you can establish eye contact and stay within your 10 minutes with time for audience questions. In hearing from each group, we will develop a mental picture of a larger area . . . a transect across campus. We will try to understand the spatial patterns of similarities and differences in the campus environment.

Step 5, due 14 December: final draft of entire group project (approximately 30 pages). Please submit your final draft with the November draft and my comments.

Group Project Assignment Handout

Name:

Debriefing on the process of writing collaboratively:
Very few of you raised your hand when asked by Kirsten Jamsen of the Writing Center whether you had worked on group writing assignments before. I'd like for you to take a few minutes to evaluate for yourself and for me the process of completing a collaborative writing assignment. The main question to answer is, "How does writing with others differ from writing alone?" After you have answered the following questions (which you will turn in to me), we will discuss as a group your various perspectives on this type of learning experience. Please continue your answers on the back of this page if you need more space.

Explain how the group paper took shape over time:

What was the hardest part of writing this paper?

From what phase of writing the paper did you learn the most? What did you learn?

What are the advantages of collaborative thinking and writing? What are the disadvantages of collaborative thinking and writing?

What are you still dissatisfied with in the draft of the group paper you turned in today? (Hint: Think critically about your project and about what you wish to revise for the final draft.)

What would you do differently if you could do the project and written paper again?

Students' Responses

"What are the advantages of collaborative writing and thinking?"

- It's nice to get different perspectives on how to solve a problem—when I get stuck, I can talk to one of my partners for assistance.
- You are given many different angles on the subject from viewpoints you yourself did not previously consider.
- You get many diverse perspectives on what is being researched, and more information is collected.
- Brainstorming is intensely enhanced ...
- As we move into careers, we will see this idea of "group" be more relevant and it is important to know how to interact with each other on the same topic.
- Having help proofreading and discussing options.
- It has also helped tremendously to get an outsider to help with ideas [using the Writing Center for group conferences].
- Each person brings in strengths and knowledge about the topic that the other group members may not have.
- Spread the work load.
- Less individual time involved.
- You have other people to bounce ideas off of and you get different perspectives on what you wrote. It makes for a better paper because there are "editors."
- Gives one an opportunity to hear different styles or ideas for writing and researching.

To guide students as they write a 15-page original research paper, Professor Yoshiko Herrera designs shorter "paper plan" assignments. These assignments build on each other, with the earlier ones asking students to describe their initial interests and to articulate precise research questions about their interests. For the later assignments, students produce an annotated bibliography and a data collection plan. This process culminates with a final presentation and final draft.

Professor Yoshiko Herrera
Political Science 401

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP RESEARCH PAPERS ON SOCIAL IDENTITIES

A Note for Other Instructors about This Assignment:
This political science course about measuring identities is structured around an original research paper. The primary goal of the assignment is for students to write a research paper related to social identities using original data that they have collected using one or more methods. The course is structured to teach students about different methods for data collection (interviews, surveys, and content analysis), in the context of empirical and theoretical readings on social identities. Students also write three structured paper proposals which use methods during the course, so that by the time they get to the final paper they have already "practiced" those methods.
Recently I began allowing students to choose whether to work individually or in groups. In a course taught in spring 2018, 1/3 chose to work individually and 2/3 in groups. Students expressed interest in topics and interest in working in groups, and then I matched students and had them talk in class and decide whether or not to work together. This process led to much greater satisfaction for students who worked in groups because they chose both that option and the people with whom they worked. The group papers accomplished more in the sense that students working in groups collected more data and their papers were more ambitious, but some of the individual papers were also very well done, and hence I don't think the difference in quality between students working individual or in groups was very clear. The group work, however, does greatly lessen the commenting and grading burden for the professor.

The Assignment for Students:
Final Paper, Plans, and Presentation
The final paper for this course will require original data collection and research on a topic related to social identities, based on the measurement techniques discussed and practiced in the course, including one of the three methods (content analysis, survey, and interviews) and UW-Madison library resources.

Paper plan 1: Identity Topic, due Feb 12, 11:00 am (1% of the final grade)
- Include your name, the date, and a descriptive title;
- Length: 1/2 to 1 single-spaced page;
- Include the following *three* numbered sections:
  1. Paragraph describing the type of identity or identities you are interested. Students should choose one or two of the types of identity covered in course readings (e.g. gender, race, national identity, etc.) and specify the place, time period, or other contextual details you are interested in (e.g. Hispanic identity in the contemporary US; transgender identity on the UW-Madison campus, national identity in Canada, gender and race among immigrants in Madison).
  2. Paragraph describing why you are interested in this topic, and what you hope to learn by studying it.
  3. Indicate whether or not you are interested in working in a group, and if so, to what extent you are open to changing or amending your topic.

Paper plan 2: Research Question & Methods, due March 19th, 11:00 am (3% of the final grade)
- Include your name, the date, and a descriptive title;
- Length: 1 to 2 single-spaced pages;
- Include the following *five* numbered sections:
  1. A clear research question related to measurement of social identities e.g. How often to state legislators discuss race or ethnicity on their websites? How diverse is the UW campus? Which identity, race or gender, is more important for foreign students on campus? Does having a strong ethnic identity make people less patriotic? How to minority students view majority students, and vice versa? In some cases the question will require clarification, e.g. what is meant by "diversity" or which "identity groups" are being considered.
  2. Provide a definition of identity in your research question, based on course readings or other sources.
  3. Discuss some preliminary hypotheses (answers to the question). These should be numbered and take the form of possible answers to your research question. They should be based on course readings or other published literature that you are aware of, but it's fine to be speculative at this point.
  4. Describe which methodology (content analysis, survey, or interviews), based on the course readings and measurement exercises, that you plan to use.
  5. Describe the main type of data sources that you plan to use (which digitized texts or what people you plan to survey or interview).

Paper plan 3: Annotated Bibliography and Data Collection Plan, due April 9th, 11:00 am (3% of the final grade)

- Include your name, the date, and a descriptive title;
- Length: 1 to 2 single-spaced pages, plus Plan 2 attached, and revised if necessary;
- This plan has 2 parts; an annotated bibliography, and a data collection plan:

  For the annotated bibliography:

  1. Based on hypotheses developed and revised from Plan 2, find 6 academic sources, i.e. journal articles or books found in the UW-Madison library system that support your hypotheses. Note: Other web-based sources or course readings can be used in the paper in addition to these from the library, but you still must find 6 from the UW library system;
  2. Write out the research question and each hypothesis and those will serve as a section headings, then under each, list a full citation (MLA) of a library source;
  3. Under each source, write 2-3 sentences explaining how it supports the research question or hypothesis.

  For the data collection plan:

  1. Describe either the texts that you will use in the paper (if doing content analysis) or the pool of respondents or interviewees and timeline for collecting responses for a survey or interviews.

Grading rubric for the three Paper Plans:

1. The structure for each Plan noted above is followed and includes all elements;
2. Each element demonstrates thoughtful effort;
3. No typos or errors;
4. Correct citation of sources;
5. Turned in on time; late papers will be marked down one grade if not posted by 11:00 am on due date, two grades down if not posted within 2 days.

Final Paper Presentations: Slides due May 2nd, 12:00 pm

This is an opportunity for you to share your work from the semester with your fellow students, and to develop presentation skills.

- Based on the number of papers, the amount of time will probably be 4-5 minutes
- Presentations should consist of 6 slides:
  1. Title slide (your name, date & presentation title)
  2. Research question
  3. Hypotheses (possible explanations)
  4. Evidence 1: Method description (how CA, Survey, or Interviews were done)
  5. Evidence 2: Results
  6. Conclusions
- Slides should use consistent style;
- You may add images or other relevant visual design elements.

Grading rubric final presentation & slides (3% of the final grade):

1. Contains 6 slides as noted above, turned in on time;
2. Text is adequate to convey points, but is not too wordy;
3. Visual images are relevant and helpful in conveying points;
4. Style is consistent on all slides; no typos;
5. Speaker addresses audience, makes eye contact and keeps audience engaged;
6. Presentation is within the time limit.

Final Paper, due May 7th, 9:45 am:

- Paper length should be approximately 15 double-spaced pages, excluding references and appendices; use 12-point font, 1-inch margins.
- Suggested minimum data collection:
  a. Content Analysis: at least 2 long (30+ pages) documents (for comparison), or at least 20 short news articles
  b. Survey: 10 questions, 50 responses
  c. Interview: 1/2 hour long, 10 people
- Use MLA parenthetical citations; References in text should include author and year, and page number if appropriate. Journal and book titles in bibliography should be italicized. Annotations of sources is not necessary for the final paper bibliography.
- Include a title page with your name, date, and a descriptive title; use appropriate style for the title page.
- Paper should include the following sections, which should should be labeled with headings:
  1. Introduction, stating the research question, a summary of the methods used to collect data, and a brief summary of the argument (2 pp.).
  2. Theoretical section (2-3 pp.): should contain:
     a. Definition of identity, based on course readings or other sources;

   b. Summary of possible different explanations (these are the theories or hypotheses that might answer the question), based on academic sources or course readings.
3. Methods Section (1-2 pp.): Explain how you collected data:
   a. For content analysis include a description of the texts (length, source, etc), and coding rules, description of dictionaries, or key words, etc.;
   b. For a survey, describe the questions, the pool of respondents & how you recruited them, when the survey was conducted, how many responses you got, etc.;
   c. For interviews, describe who you interviewed, how you found people, when you did the interviews, how long the interviews lasted, where they took place, etc.
4. Data section (5-6 pp.): Discuss your findings: You should use tables, figures, or a set of extended quotations to highlight key points. Discuss how the findings support (or do not support) each the hypotheses (answers to the question).
5. Conclusion (1-2 pp.).
6. Bibliography (not annotated, does not count toward page limit).
7. Appendix (does not count toward page limit); include interview or survey instrument, full texts (if not too long, otherwise just links to sources); extra tables or figures, etc.

<u>Grading rubric for final papers (30% of the final grade):</u>
1. Clear and well-motivated research question related to course content;
2. Clear definition of identity that is being studied;
3. Comprehensive discussion of explanations from existing literature;
4. Use of at least 6 academic sources, and citation of course readings where appropriate;
5. Clear discussion of methods used in paper;
6. Data collection meets minimum requirements;
7. Good analysis of evidence for different hypotheses based on collected data & findings;
8. Proper citation of sources;
9. Appendix contains required material;
10. Follows structure set out on syllabus, and includes title and sub-headings;
11. Good word choice and tone;
12. No typos or errors;
13. Within the page limit.

Group Work: Students may choose to work in groups of up to 4 students on the proposals, the final paper, and the presentation.

- If you are interested in working in a group, indicate that on proposal 1 as outlined above.

If you choose to work in a group:

- For the Paper Plans 2 and 3, add an additional section to discuss how work will be divided by each student
- At least two measurement techniques must be used on the final paper.
- The final paper length will be longer (by 5 pages per additional person, e.g. from 20, 25, or 30 pp); the additional pages will be in the data section (to discuss the additional data collection).
- Make sure the final paper is integrated, even though the paper has different section, and different people might do more work on one or another of them. Make sure all sections are connected; each group member should read the entire paper to make sure all sections are integrated.
- In a separate document for the final paper, each group member should turn in a one-half page description of their own individual contribution and evaluation of others' contributions to the research paper.

For this group writing assignment, students complete a market segment analysis for a new product or service. Professor Amber Epp outlines the required sections of the analysis and summarizes her evaluation criteria.

Professor Amber Epp
Marketing 305, Consumer Behavior

A GROUP ASSIGNMENT IN A MARKETING COURSE

Project Overview

Students will work in groups of 3-4 for this assignment. To begin the project, choose a company and select a "new" product or service being introduced by this company. A good place to find product introductions is on a company's website, either under a "products" heading or in the company's press releases. You may also find some interesting new products/services in reviews of new innovations from various magazine and blogger sources:

Time magazine's list of the "Best Inventions of the Year"
http://time.com/4572079/best-inventions-2016/
Marketplace that focuses on start ups and indie projects (best with Google Chrome browser)
http://outgrow.me
Good Housekeeping Home Innovations
http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/home/a40109/home-innovations-2017/
Annual Edison Awards
http://www.edisonawards.com/winners2017.php
CES Innovation Awards
http://www.ces.tech/Events-Experiences/Innovation-Awards-Program/Honorees.aspx

The product or service you select may be entirely novel or simply a line extension of an existing product. Please provide me with the name of the product or service your team has selected (either via email or in class) by **Thursday, September 21st**. Next, imagine you are the marketing team in charge of the product/service you selected, and choose a relevant market segment to target. Your task is to convince company decision makers that this market segment makes sense, provide them with a detailed analysis of the segment, and offer recommendations for how to reach them.

Status Report

Please submit a progress report (about 3-4 single-spaced pages) by **Thursday, October 12th**. This report should include the following components: (a) define your target market segment, (b) generate initial analysis of the target market segment [This could be a bulleted list summarizing what you know about your consumers' behaviors.], (c) list any questions you have about the project, especially related to any information are you having trouble finding, and (d) provide a reference list of your secondary data sources. One purpose of this report is to keep you on track in completing the project on time. Another purpose is to determine whether you are on the right track in analyzing your market. We will meet in person to go over your progress.

Market Segment Analysis Paper (100 points)

Your Market Segment Analysis paper (about 20-25 double-spaced pages, including figures and references) should include the following sections and provide complete information regarding the features of your target market.

Title Page
Please include the name of the product/service, type of project (market segment analysis), date submitted, and the names of your group members.

Table of Contents
List section titles in order, with corresponding page numbers.

Executive Summary
This is a brief (less than one page) overview of the project that should convince readers of the importance of this document. You should outline the key elements of your paper.

Customer Profile

At the beginning of this section, briefly identify your target market segment (e.g., men, ages 18-24) and offer a rationale or justification for selecting it. Once you have selected a target market segment, your customer profile should include a complete explanation of the following characteristics:

- **Size** (How large is the market and what is its growth potential?)
- **Relevant demographic variables** (age, income, etc.—focus on variables you did NOT use to segment the market initially)

- **Lifestyle Characteristics** (What are their values, motivations, and/or attitudes? How do they spend their time—activities, hobbies, interests?)
- **Communication/media behavior** (What do they listen to, watch, and read? How do they communicate with one another and with the company? What are their preferred technologies— e.g., email, twitter, facebook, texting? What types of behaviors do they engage in online?)
- **Purchasing behavior** (Are consumers in your market brand loyal? Where do they shop for this type of product—specific retail outlets? online? How much are they willing to spend on this product category? Are they responsive to price incentives?)
- **Product/Service usage** (How often do they buy this product? What benefits are they seeking? How do they use this product/service?)
- **Relevant cultural influences and industry trends** (This section requires you to consider how cultural contexts shape consumer behavior. What cultural trends are relevant to your market? You may also wish to include industry trends related to the product/service you've selected that may impact the behavior of your market.)

Information outlined in the profile ***must be based on research*** obtained from relevant secondary data sources. ***Please remember to cite your sources in the body of the paper (parenthetically or using footnotes)!*** The purpose of this section is to build an argument for the attractiveness of this market segment and offer information that will be useful in reaching this market and developing a relevant positioning statement.

Positioning Statement

After developing your customer profile, generate a positioning statement for your product/service. What image will you attach to your product/service, based on what you know about your target market segment from the research in your customer profile? Provide a brief rationale for your positioning statement.

Marketing Mix Elements

In this section, provide a specific account of your proposed marketing mix strategy (including product/service, promotion, distribution and price) that is ***ready to implement***. Your choices should be well-supported and refer to the research you presented in the customer profile.

- ***Product/Service***
  This section should provide a description of the product/service and specify its features and benefits. That is, how will your product fit into or match your consumers' lifestyles? This section also might include recommendations for packaging and/or service environment elements that should be incorporated.
- **Distribution**
  This section should outline information about where consumers can purchase the product (e.g. specific retail outlets, online, etc.). You also may incorporate/propose potential partnerships here, if applicable.
- **Price**
  This section should include your pricing strategy. Please give pricing information (including any special discounts or rates for your market segment), and justify based on your research.
- ***Promotion***
  This section should outline your choices related to promoting your product/service. Your plan should include general media (i.e. television, magazine, billboard, online, non-traditional, etc.) you recommend as well as specific outlets (e.g. *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, *Men's Health, Sports Illustrated, and online episodes of Dexter).* These choices should make sense based on the research you conducted about your target market's communication and media behavior.

Reference List

Please cite your sources internally and provide a full list of references at the end, using either APA or MLA formatting.

<u>Presentation (20 points)</u>

A group presentation, limited to oral highlights and summary visuals, will be required during the final weeks of class (**November 30th – December 12th**). More presentation details will be given later in the semester. All group members should present and be prepared to answer questions. To facilitate the grading process, please bring hard copies of your presentation materials (for example, slides, handouts, etc.) to me on the day of your presentation.

<u>Summary of Evaluation and Due Dates</u>

In addition to the content of the paper/presentation as outlined above, **performance on both the written report and presentation will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:** logic (are your marketing mix choices supported by your customer profile research?), quality of writing, thoroughness, clarity, creativity, and professional appearance.

Grading of final project*:

Semester Project Component	Points	Due Date
Select product/service		Sept. 21st
Status Report		Oct. 12th
Market Segment Analysis	100	Nov 30th
Presentation	20	Nov 30th – Dec 12th
Total Project Points	**120**	

*At the completion of the project, you will be given an opportunity to evaluate the relative participation and contribution of your fellow team members. These evaluations will be considered when assigning individual project grades.

Professor John Yin provides marginal comments and an end note comment on a group's research proposal ("Preventing Food Spoilage through the Commercial Development of Enterocin AS-48"). His comments highlight strengths and weaknesses, pose questions that refine students' thinking, and justify his evaluation.

Professor John Yin
Chemical and Biological Engineering 560

TEAM RESEARCH PROJECTS IN BIOCHEMICAL ENGINEERING

Team Project 1: Engineering Beyond Natural Boundaries

The chemicals of life include lipids, sugars, nucleic acids, and proteins, as you have encountered in your biology and biochemistry coursework and reading. Today an active and growing area of research is to biochemically expand the repertoire of biological products and processes by use of non-natural building blocks. For example, one may incorporate non-natural amino acids into proteins, non-natural bases into nucleic acids, or non-natural sugars into polysaccharides. These examples will serve as topic areas for your group assignment.

Review the recent literature in your topic and prepare a group presentation on the topic**. Address the following:

a) Why would anyone want to use non-natural building blocks in the synthesis of proteins, nucleic acids or polysaccharides? Give technological motivations.
b) What challenges does one encounter when using non-natural building blocks? Provide at least one specific example to show how this challenge has been overcome.
c) Describe how a specific non-natural product has been characterized and how its offer new properties or activities. What opportunities are opened?
d) Discuss the broader technological (engineering) challenges to making and applying such non-natural products.

**In-class group-work on Thursday, 4 Feb

Deliverables due on Thursday, Feb 11, during class:

- Title and Abstract, 300-500 words
- Group presentation to the class (10-12 min) + Q&A (3 min)
- Annotated bibliography of references used in the assignment. Annotations should be 1-2 sentence descriptions of how the specific reference was useful to you. For examples of brief annotations, see cited reference lists in articles in Current Opinion in Biotechnology.

Team Project 2: Research Proposal

A broad goal of biochemical engineering is to apply chemical and biological engineering approaches to define and solve problems that impact human health, energy, agriculture, the environment and food. An aim of this course is to provide an opportunity for you to gain research experience as a member of a team. Each team will:

- identify a societal need/problem, determine its magnitude, and quantify specifications for a solution to the problem.
- supply evidence that demonstrates the feasibility of the proposed solution. Evidence may be drawn from the literature, or theoretical or computational studies. In addition, teams should propose relevant experimental or theoretical/simulation studies to demonstrate the feasibility of their idea.
- learn to work effectively as a member of a team and communicate your idea to your peers and to Prof. Yin

Each team will prepare a 10-12min presentation (plus 3 min questions), and a 12 page double-spaced proposal that describes a novel approach to address an important societal need. The project should be completely new, not based on previous project(s) you may have proposed for other classes or related to research being actively pursued anywhere, as detected by a keyword websearch. The 12 pages includes at 3500-word maximum that include all tables and figures. The bibliography does not fall within the length limits. Each team will meet with Prof. Yin: 15 min team meeting to present and briefly discuss preliminary ideas (aim to meet before Spring recess).

Presentations & Written Proposals due on Tuesday, 3 May

Project Summary (1 page max)
The proposal must contain a summary of the proposed activity suitable for publication, not more than one page in length. It should not be an abstract of the proposal, but rather a self-contained description of the activity that would result if the proposal were funded. The summary should be written in the third person and include a statement of objectives and methods to be employed. It should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields and, insofar as possible, understandable to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader.

Project Description
The Project Description should provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken and must include: objectives for the period of the proposed work and expected significance; and relation to the present state of knowledge in the field. The

Project Description should include: Specific aims (2 or 3, one page max), Research Strategy, Significance (background), Innovation (1 page max), Research Plan (addressing how each specific aim will be carried out)

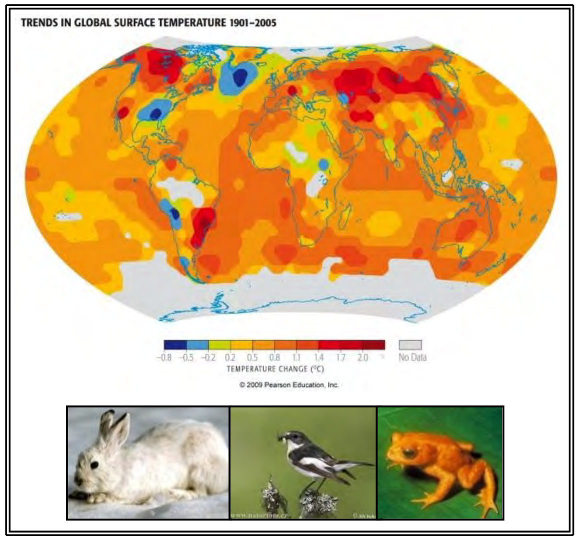
In this mixed undergraduate and graduate course, students work in groups to conduct a climate change vulnerability assessment for a species of animal. Their audience is a governmental agency. They complete the project in stages, submitting periodic progress reports, meeting as a group with the professor along the way, and giving a final group presentation. Another four pages of guidance for students--specific questions to answer in the different components of this report—is available at the WAC website (https://writing.wisc.edu/wac/resources-for-instructors/).

Professor Benjamin Zuckerberg
Forest and Wildlife Ecology 660, Climate Change Ecology

A WRITING PROJECT IN FOREST AND WILDLIFE ECOLOGY 660: CLIMATE CHANGE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Climate Change Vulnerability is the propensity of a community or species to experience harm from climate change due to its 1) ***sensitivity*** to the climate variability, 2) ***exposure*** to historic and future climate change, and 3) ability to ***adapt*** to novel climate conditions. Assessing the vulnerability of a species or community to the effects of climate change requires an understanding of how climate affects demography, physiology, phenology, habitat, and biotic interactions.

Climate Change Adaptation refers to **strategies** adopted by agencies to manage species or natural systems based on an awareness that conditions are about to change, or have already changed, and that action is required to reduce their vulnerability through active management and conservation.



The potential ecological impacts of climate change vary for different species and communities. The "effectiveness" of adaptation will thus be species- specific, and can be measured only against a set of **objectives**. Several concepts related to adaptive management are important for successful adaptation to climate-induced stresses, but none more important than assessing **species vulnerability**.

The Mission: Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA)
Numerous state and federal agencies are currently interested in identifying which species are most vulnerable to the impacts of past and future climate change. Principles of climate change vulnerability, adaptation, and mitigation are increasingly becoming necessary components of environmental assessments and wildlife action plans. As part of this exercise, you have been contracted by a government agency to develop a climate change vulnerability assessment (CCVA) for a given species or community.

For undergraduate students, you must choose one of the following species (many of these species have been identified as being particularly susceptible to climate change):

Mink Frog (*Rana septentrionalis*)
Eastern Massauga Rattlesnake (*Sistrurus catenatus*)
Greater Prairie Chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*)
Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)
Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Setophaga caerulescens*)
Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)
Snowshoe Hare (*Lepus americanus*)
Ermine (short-tailed weasel) (*Mustela ermin*

For graduate students, you have more flexibility in what species, community, or region to choose. However, graduate student projects must have all the same components of the CCVA as the rest of the students in the class. There is an increased emphasis on adding a quantitative assessment for capturing aspects of sensitivity and exposure. In the past, students have 1) analyzed preliminary field data, or 2) used existing biological data sets from national databases (http://www.gbif.org/). In some cases, students have conducted reviews of policy and management plans when empirical data were lacking. Because of the diversity of past graduate student projects, I ask that graduate students communicate with me about possible ideas and send me a brief summary of their intentions by **September 29th**. I am also happy to meet with groups beforehand (please send an email for an appointment). Basic Components of CCVA

Your CCVAs should be well-crafted and organized. Use Ecology formatting guidelines (http://esapubs.org/esapubs/preparation.htm). You should include a minimum 30 references that are **primary literature**. Primary literature is that which contains original data from peer- reviewed journals or scholarly reviews rather than summaries of the findings of others (e.g., textbooks, encyclopedias). Web-based references are appropriate, but only if they are primary references.

Wikipedia is not a primary reference! It is expected the final draft of your CCVA will follow correct guidelines and will go through multiple versions of proofreading for grammatical errors.

A final written report is due during the last week of classes (there's no Final Exam). The report should be 12-point font, single inch margins, and single spaced. The following tables provides a summary of sections and recommended pages.

CCVA Component	Undergrad	Graduate	No. of Pages
Executive Summary			350 words
Ecological Significance and Conservation Status			2
Review of Sensitivity			2
• SAVS analysis and table			
Description of Data			1/2
Conceptual Model			2
Review of Exposure			3
• Climate Reanalyzer Output			
• Historic/Future Climate Change			
Vulnerability Assessment			3
• Estimated changes in distribution, phenology, etc.			
Recommended Adaptation Strategies and Tactics			2
Summary			1
Literature Cited			~30 references
Additional Figures and Tables			5 pages max.

Progress Reports

There will be three one-page progress reports. These are opportunities for you to provide a brief overview of your CCVA and receive some additional input.

Progress Report I [DUE DATE: October 6]
Species or community of interest (5 pts)
Brief review of status and ecological significance (5 pts)

Progress Report II [DUE DATE: November 3]
Draft of conceptual model (10 pts)
Brief review of potential sensitives to climate variability (5 pts) SAVS table and summary (5 pts)

Progress Report III [DUE DATE: November 17]
Final draft of conceptual model (10 pts) Draft of review of exposure (5 pts) Draft of adaptation objectives (5 pts)

Group Presentation Guidelines

At the end of the semester, all groups will present their climate adaptation plan. Groups will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Individual Evaluation
Organization
Visual aids
Audible and clear voice
Eye contact
Professionalism
Group Evaluation
Sensitivity and exposure
Vulnerability assessment
Adaptation
Summary
Additional components:
Quality
Quantitative
Imagination

Multimodal Writing Assignments and Writing in Online Courses

Professor Adam Kern assigns a sequence of digital assignments for his course in East Asian Visual Cultures. Two of these are included below.

Professor Adam Kern
East Asian 433 / East Asian 833

MULTIMEDIA WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN EAST ASIAN VISUAL CULTURE

Description of Course Writing Goals
A secondary goal of the course is to help each student research, write, and publish online an academic digital essay presenting his or her research. Toward this end, training for beginners as well as tips for more advanced students will be provided as part of the course itself, drawing on the expertise of staff members from DoIT / STS, Engage, the library system, and the Writing Center.

Each student will present his or her final research project in the form of an approximately ten-minute digital essay (worth 60% of the course grade) by publishing it on YouTube. Each student will also be required to submit a brief prospectus (10%) and a storyboard (20%) laying out a preliminary thesis, research, and findings with an eye and ear to how these will be integrated into the digital essay.

Digital Essay Assignment
The digital essay should answer the question "What is early modern Japanese visual culture?" in a way that makes sense in light of each student's particular research interests. Students of EA 833 should make demonstrable and meaningful use of Japanese-language materials in their research. The essay of each student, however, should make an original contribution to knowledge. The essay should deploy such components as still images, video clips, a soundtrack, voiceovers, animation, subtitles, and so on. Essays should include a title, student's name, course title, instructor's name, institution title, date, and complete list of all sources (including music). Most crucially, each project must obtain proper permissions for these sources. Although a workshop session will be devoted exclusively to this topic, an idea of what is involved can be gleaned from: http://www.library.wisc.edu/copyright/#copyright-basics.

In addition to meeting these criteria, essays will be assessed for originality of argument, clarity, and persuasiveness, as well as for technical polish. Essays should contain a readily discernible thesis statement, germane supporting evidence, and a conclusion that does more than merely regurgitate said thesis statement. Completed digital essays must be published on YouTube and its embedded link sent to me via email. Each essay must also be finalized in .mov form, burned to a disk, and physically placed in the plastic bin on the door to my office.

Storyboarding Assignment—Simulated Multimedia Drafting
A storyboard is a comic-book like script for a multimedia project (e.g., a digital essay, animation, or feature movie). A storyboard consists of a sequence of images or illustrations accompanied by notes about transitions between images, the soundtrack, text, and so forth. Its purpose is to help you "pre-visualize" your project. Pre-visualization is a way of drafting the project before committing too much production time to aspects of the project that ultimately might not prove viable. The storyboard is thus a kind of simulated draft of your final multimedia project. With a draft, you of course can—and inevitably will–change any of its components as you move toward the finished product. Ideally, however, your storyboard should be complete enough to give your reader a clear idea of how your final project will look, sound, and feel.

Key Components:
1) **Title Slide(s)**. Your **title** proper should convey your ***topic*** (e.g. "Such and such in Eighteenth-Century Japanese Visual Culture") or, if you know it already, your ***thesis*** (e.g. "Eighteenth-Century Japanese Pornography: You Might *Not* Know It When You See It!"). The title slide should also include your **name**.
2) **Visuals**. A storyboard needs to lay out a sequence of **images** (e.g. captured images, photographs, video clips, animation) or **illustrations** (e.g., your own doodles) that represents actual **visuals** to be included in the project. Although the ideal would be to use actual visuals for which you have obtained permissions, in practice it is perfectly acceptable to use a "place holder" to indicate a generic image (e.g. "*shunga* image here") even if you do not have the actual image yet. A storyboard should also indicate notes about such things as the estimated *timing* of visuals (e.g., "five seconds"), transitions between visuals (e.g., "fade through black, .5 seconds"), and even any special effects to draw attention to a portion of your visuals (e.g., Ken Burns effect).
3) **Text**. A storyboard also needs to coordinate your visuals with your **text**. While the ideal would be to use an actual **script**, to be conveyed to your audience as a **voiceover** and/or **subtitles**, it is okay—and sometimes even necessary—to use generic notes about what you intend to say or to have said here (e.g., "First interview here"). When using subtitles, be sure to specify type, timing, special effects, and so on.
4) **Soundtrack**. While it is not necessary to include a **soundtrack** (consisting of music, sound effects, voices, and so on), a soundtrack can help to provide a rhythmic frame for cuts among pictures, supporting ambiance, even vital information, even if only used as background sound.
5) **Credits**. You absolutely must have **credits** at the end of your project. Credits convey necessary information about your visuals and soundtrack, like *permissions*, but also can indicate other important information, like title, authorship, year made, and so on.

Professor Anha Skop outlines the learning goals and expectations for her students as well as the context of her upper-level genetics course. In the course, students construct a web page showcasing their research on a human disease or trait. She provides her students with clear instructions about the required components of the project and grading criteria.

Professor Ahna Skop
Genetics 564, Capstone in Genomics

LEARNING GOALS AND A WEB-BASED PROJECT IN GENETICS 564

There are several large gaps in how we teach science today that I have tried to address: 1) How do we get students to understand key concepts, 2) have them apply the knowledge they learned, 3) give them skills to communicate science effectively. You can know the facts, but if you can't apply them or communicate them well, how can you convince others that your ideas are important? With our current political and funding climate, these communication skills are increasingly critical for science policy that affects us all. To address these issues, I created a 100% active learning course that **enables them to think like a scientist** and **learn to communicate more effectively**. In my course, students ask questions, participate in discussions, interact in groups, write Specific Aims, come up with hypotheses, experience peer review, and learn how to present their work visually and orally on a website they build and a final presentation at the end of the semester. In turn, these experiences have made students more confident asking questions, forming hypotheses, and what it takes to be a scientist in today's world.

Genetics 564 Course Learning Goals

1. Learn to read and evaluate papers from the primary literature in the areas of genomics and proteomics
2. Gain confidence in modern experimental methods used to ask fundamental biological questions
3. Learn to probe current genetic data repositories, such as bioinformatics databases for useful information
4. Learn to synthesize, present, and critique original research in the selected areas of genomics and proteomics
5. Effectively communicate work to the public in written form by publishing own research in a website format
6. Effectively communicate work to peers/public in spoken form through practice making and giving presentations
7. Effectively communicating work through the visual: image and slide layout
8. Address ethical, scientific and societal issues relating to their project by researching information from various sources, including researchers, individuals with the disease/trait, family members, YouTube videos and various popular press articles related to semester-long project on a human disease gene
9. To learn the scientific peer review process by experiencing several in-class peer reviews of student presentations, Specific aims, visuals and web-based projects.
10. To learn how diversity (social and intellectual) makes you more creative and harder-working in science.

Creating an inclusive learning environment using Growth Mindset Theory: There are many ways of knowing and means of learning, but creating an inclusive learning environment is key to student success regardless of background or ability. The **first** way I create a positive teaching and learning climate is first getting to know my students (by first name/hometown/hobbies/passions), introducing how similar I am to them, and sharing my path in science. The **second** way I do this, is by grading backwards. Here, I give all of the students the total points on day one and subtract points over the course of the semester. This is based on the Growth Mindset Theory. Here, the total points at the beginning of the semester allows the students to develop their knowledge and skills as a scientist. Being a scientist is not something you are born with but can be developed. Losing points is a positive as a few points here and there doesn't create major stress for the students. 'A' students and 'C' students are treated as equals on day one. All students accept the challenge to the semester long project and the outcomes are remarkable. (see student project websites: genetics564.weebly.com/projects)

Grading:
The total points possible is **800**. **Everyone starts with an "A" (800pts) on day one** and then you lose points over the course of the semester. Everyone has the potential to get an "A" in this course. It is impossible to fail unless you don't do any work or participate in class.

Creating a Web-Based Project on a Gene and Disease

The goal of this project is an in-depth, genomic and bioinformatic analysis of a human disease gene or trait. This disease gene must be homologous to one or more genes in one or more model organisms (the bacterium *E. coli*, the single-celled yeast, *S. cerevisiae*, the budding yeast, *S. pombe*, the roundworm *C. elegans*, the arthropod *D. melanogaster*, the mouse *M. musculus*, and the plant, *Arabidopsis thaliana*).

Keep in mind that your project should include both a "global" analysis of your selected disease gene and the implied "local" analysis of a single, isolated gene. A global analysis reflects the central themes of the course: structural, functional (both transcriptomics and proteomics), and comparative genomics. A local analysis reflects the gene's structure and function and its primary role in the disease etiology. Both analysis types should reflect the intricate relationships among sequence, structure, function, genome organization and expression, and evolution. The lab activities throughout the semester will assist you in conducting these analyses.

You will, of course, be making extensive use of bioinformatics programs and databases found on the Internet (NCBI, etc.). My evaluation of your project will be based in part on the depth of your analyses, and on how well you use these available bioinformatics tools. But a tool is only a tool, and its use generates data that must be interpreted, analyzed, compared, and critiqued from a variety of perspectives. Finally, conclusions must be drawn along with recommendations for future experiments or analyses.

The format of your project should be that of a Web Page, so you will want to use **Weebly.com** (or any other web-based program you are familiar with) to construct the final version with all text and images. The length depends on the amount of information associated with a particular disease gene, and you should strive for brevity and clarity.

- Find a disease or trait and an associated gene/protein for which they have found a mutation.
- You will be working on this gene/protein for the entire semester.
- You will craft a **1-page Specific Aims** that you will work on the entire semester
- You will present your FINAL Specific Aims at the end of the semester in a **15-minute presentation** to the class.
- You will have built a **website** with all of the research and bioinformatic information you have obtained in class, outside class and in lab. *This website will be your published work which can be used in your resume as published research.*
- Your **Specific Aims, final talk** and **website** will be *peer reviewed* by the class and by the instructor.

Gen 564 Semester-Long Project Details

Select a human genetic disorder or trait, by which we mean a disease or heritable predisposition to a certain condition. It can be a single gene disease/trait, or a polygenic one. In the case of a polygenic disorder, you need only do the genomic analysis for *one* of the involved genes. The role of the selected gene in disease should be featured in your project, and you should review the underlying genetic evidence for the role of the gene in the disease. Some disorders are not polygenic traits, but you will find that more than one gene can cause or predispose different individuals to the disease (BRCA1 and BRCA2 for heritable predisposition to breast cancer, for example). In a case like this, you would introduce both genes as causing the predisposition, and then select one to focus on in detail for the rest of the website project.

Specific Aims: Over the course of this semester you will be writing a Specific Aims for your project to help you craft a hypothesis and experimental approach for your project. You must use genomic and proteomic techniques you learned in class that would address the specific aims you are proposing and discuss why these techniques are appropriate for your project. You should have 3 aims in your Specific Aims. Well-defined specific aims or objectives are key to the successful completion of a research project. The specific aims should answer the question "What are you going to do and why?" You will need to spend more time planning than writing. You really need to think, read and do research about your project before you proceed until you can ASK a Question! Then: 1) Decide on a hypothesis, 2) Define the aims to test your hypothesis and 3) Choose genomic and/or proteomic approaches that you learned from your readings that you think are the best way to address yourhypotheses and questions. Mapping out a strategy will pay off in the end. HINT: Each week your readings are chosen to be models for genomic and proteomic approaches for your own project. So pay attention and get inspired by your readings and your research. By writing specific aims, you will be prepared for your final presentation and in writing up your conclusions and future research sections of your project. Your peers and Ahna will be evaluating you with rubrics over the course of the semester, just as you would experience as a scientist in real life.

Hypothesis: Your hypothesis triggers everything you do. Conceptually, think of it as your destination, determining the course of your semester-long research. Choose a hypothesis that is well focused and testable, and that your experimental results will be able to prove or disprove. Your classmates and Ahna must believe that your hypothesis is sound and important enough to be tested.

Final Presentations: You are going to present what you learned and found out about your gene/protein in the last few weeks of class. This presentation is 15 minutes long. It's about a 12-minute talk with 3 minutes of questions. Briefly go over what your main findings over the course of semester were for your gene/protein and how these findings helped you craft your **hypothesis** (which you will state) and the subsequent experiments you are going to perform to test these hypotheses. Conclude with a brief discussion of what you think is the most important thing to find out next about this disorder/trait and the gene(s) that cause it, and discuss why. You should assume that lab money and manpower are not your limitations.
Presentation rough draft: Successful final presentations result from well-planned and thought-out presentation drafts. You will turn in 2 rough drafts of your final presentations. Ahna will provide you feedback and a time to meet with her one-on-one.

Final Website: Your final web project includes all of the assignments plus data that you obtained about your gene/protein over the course of the semester. Using bioinformatic approaches, you are to use what you learned from our in-class discussions and in-lab hands-on experiences about a particular technique and online database to figure out everything there is to know about your gene/protein. By the end of the semester you should have discovered a lot. And by all means you are welcome to venture off to any online database that is available to you to try to understand and possibly come up with some ideas on how to "cure" your disease that you are studying. The website is not due until after finals and can will be considered published work by you! You can use this on your resume as published research.

References: Put the references to journal articles, images and websites (including bioinformatic websites you use) that you used over the course of the semester on your project *on each page that you create.* Figures should be referenced as you use them on each page in a figure legend. *Every page that you create should have references* (overall grade by-10% **pts** if this is not the case). If you use a bioinformatic website, like PFAM, hyperlink out to that website you used for each analysis.
**References should be on every slide where you have shown data or images that are not your own*

FINAL Specific Aims Rubric

Student's Name:____________________________________ **Date:** _____________

Category	Excellent/ Acceptable 6	Adequate (Needs minor revisions) 4	Not Adequate (Needs major revisions) 2	Poor (Not acceptable) 0	Score
Intro and Background: Should critically evaluate existing knowledge (knowns) and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill (unknowns). Importance of the research and the impact of the study on advancing scientific knowledge should be clearly stated	very clearly explains background and gaps in knowledge	clearly explains background and gaps in knowledge but does not relate the two	somewhat explains background and gaps in knowledge, though unclearly or without relating the two	intro section is unclear and does not relate background and gaps in knowledge	
Disease & Gene Disease and symptoms/phenotype were mentioned. Gene associated with disease was described and the biological process the gene functions in was described	very clearly explains disease, gene and biological process that is the focus of the project	mentions disease, gene and biological process but does not relate them well	somewhat explains disease, gene, and biological process though unclearly or without relating them at all	No mention of the disease, gene or biological process at all	
Objectives and Rationale: Should clearly state the study goals and clarify the thought process used to generate the central hypothesis	objectives and rationale are clearly stated and easy to follow	objectives and rationale are stated but may not be clear given background	objectives and rationale are stated but it is not clear how hypothesis was generated	objectives or rationale are not stated and it is not clear how hypothesis was generated	
Primary Goals	clearly stated goals that reflect intro and objectives given	stated, but goals are not clear given intro and objectives	some stated, but goals do not reflect intro and objectives given or are not clear	goals are not stated	
Specific Aims: Should be relevant to study the question, address the overall hypothesis, and fill in the stated knowledge gaps in the field.	all aims are clearly stated and relevant to background and objectives given	aims stated and relevant but are not clear given background and objectives	some aims stated but not clear or relevant to background and objectives given	specific aims are not stated or are not relevant to background and objectives given	
Hypotheses: Should correspond with each stated specific aim and must be testable using genomic, proteomic & bioinformatic analyses	all clearly stated, match study aims, and testable with genomic, proteomic & bioinformatic analyses	stated, but all may not match study aims. all testable with genomic, proteomic & bioinformatic analyses	some stated but may not be clear, do not match study aims, and are not testable with genomic, proteomic & bioinformatic analyses	hypotheses not stated or not testable using genomic, proteomic & bioinformatic analyses	
Approach: Genomic, Proteomic & Bioinformatic Analyses learned in class or lab	All aims use a range of genomic/proteomic or bioinformatic approaches we learned in class/lab	2 aims use genomic/proteomic or bioinformatic approaches in class/lab	1 aim uses genomic/proteomic or bioinformatic approaches in class/lab	None of the aims use genomic/proteomic or bioinformatic approaches in class/lab	
Rationale: Why each aim is being proposed was stated	Each aim has a clear reason why the question is being asked and approach is being used	2 aims have a clear reason why the question is being asked and approach is being used	1 aim has a clear reason why the question is being asked and approach is being used	None of the aims have a clear reason why the question is being asked and approach is being used	
			Total Score +2pts		**/50**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

This assignment asks students to use the annotation site Rap Genius to annotate an online text of their choosing using images, videos, links, and text. In doing so, they demonstrate their understanding of key concepts and practice critical reflection of online texts.

Professor Jeremy Morris
Communication Arts 346

CRITICAL INTERNET PROJECT IN COMMUNICATION ARTS

Internet Genius Prompt
Using the technologies behind the annotation site Rap Genius (http://genius.com/), this project requires you to annotate a text of your choosing to make a critical commentary on it. As with Rap Genius' analysis of lyrics, your annotations should provide extra information to the reader, build on the text and critically reflect on it. Your annotations can be in the form of more text, links to other references or sources, images, animated gifs, etc. Your annotations can be about a specific word or term, or can summarize an entire sentence or paragraph, but they should explain the text and expand it. As with Rap Genius, the annotations can also be a mix of factual material, informed opinion, and playful commentary. That said, the annotations must include mention of course concepts and keywords, and should make reference to at least two course texts at some point during the annotations. Use the course concepts and keywords as a way to think CRITICALLY about the documents. Your project will be judged not only on your ability to extend and clarify the text in the documents, but on your ability to challenge, question and reflect on the substance of the document in question using course material.

You may choose any "text" or web page but you must have your choice approved by your instructor before beginning the assignment. While we encourage you to pick a text that is of interest to you, be sure to look for something that you feel you can connect to several course concepts. In the past, we have directed students to posts like Google's "Ten Things We Know to be True" guiding principles (http://www.google.com/about/ company/philosophy/) or John Perry Barlow's "Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace" (https://www.eff.org/cyberspace-independence). Both these texts are rich with some of the issues and ideologies we've discussed in class.

Assignment Guidelines

- Annotations (i.e. the comments you write, not the original article) should be between 800 and 1200 words in total.
- Annotations can include images, gifs, videos, links to other sources and basic text. They should include at least 5 **images or videos** and **3 links** to relevant web content.
- Follow the style and tone of Rap Genius but remember this is still a formal project.
- Annotations can be done via the course blog or via traditional footnotes in word, multimedia mark-up software like Acrobat, Preview, or screengrab services like Jing
- Not every single sentence of the source material needs to be annotated, though annotations can cover words, sentences or entire paragraphs.
- Annotations can explain difficult concepts or offer alternate definitions, they can expand the text by adding extra arguments or opinions for understanding it, or they can be a playful diversion. Your paper should balance all three of these kinds of annotations.
- Annotations should include at least 2 references to class material.

[Internet Genius Mechanics – See online instructions]
Example: https://genius.it/courses.commarts.wisc.edu/346/

Rubric
Content (10%) - How useful, engaging and in-depth are the annotations? How appropriate/relevant is the choice of the source text? How well does the source text allow for annotations about course related content? How well does the student explain the text and expand on it through their annotation? Does the student simply provide definitions, or do they use the annotations to both expand on and critique some of the assumptions in the texts? How well does the student link to additional relevant material? How well do they use images, gifs and other modes of communication to annotate the text? How clear are the annotations?

Research (5%) – Does the student use the recommended amount of sources from class materials and other materials? How appropriate and original are the sources the students use? How well does the student link the sources to the annotation to which they attach them? Can the student fully explain the concepts they are citing, or do they simply mention course material in passing without fully using it to comment on or expand the text in question?

Delivery (5%)
How well-written, insightful and striking are the annotations? Do they follow the form and tone of Genius? Do they use the recommended number of image, video and links and meet the other guidelines above? Are the annotations particularly creative or engaging, or are they merely explanatory? Does the author show a thoughtful approach to annotations that balances academic seriousness with playfulness?

Professor Erica Halverson uses her FIG (First-Year Interest Group) syllabus to outline her course's sequence of assignments, which culminates with students' creating their own This American Life podcast. For examples of students' projects, see: http://digitalsalon2011.blogspot.com/2011/03/and-one-for-all.html.

Professor Erica Halverson
FIG Course: L&S 106

RADIO STORIES IN A FIG COURSE SYLLABUS

Representing Self Through Media: A Personal Journey Through *This American Life*

Course Description & Goals:
The overarching goal of this class is to understand the relationship between identity and story. Theorists from a variety of fields, including psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, performance arts, and media studies, have described the tight link between the stories we tell about our lives and the identities we take on. We will explore this relationship both theoretically and practically. Over the course of the semester, we will read from many of these disciplines in order to develop a working understanding of identity, literacy, and representation. Along the way, we'll do some writing on these topics, A LOT of discussing, and hopefully some pushing back.

On the practical side, we'll test our growing knowledge of the core concepts of the course (identity, literacy, and representation) through a semester-long project I call, "A personal journey through *This American Life.*" *This American Life* is Ira Glass' award winning, long running radio show on National Public Radio. We'll learn more about it, but briefly, the website describes their show this way:

> One of our problems from the start has been that when we try to describe *This American Life* in a sentence or two, it just sounds awful. For instance: each week we choose a theme and put together different kinds of stories on that theme. That doesn't sound like something we'd want to listen to on the radio, and it's our show. So usually we just say what we're not. We're not a news show or a talk show or a call-in show. We're not really formatted like other radio shows at all. Instead, we do these stories that are like movies for radio. There are people in dramatic situations. Things happen to them. There are funny moments and emotional moments and—hopefully—moments where the people in the story say interesting, surprising things about it all. It has to be surprising. It has to be fun.

Each of you will be responsible for creating a *This American Life*-style radio story. You can work with someone or alone, though you will have to work with others to create your "show"—several stories put together based on a common theme. This process will be heavily scaffolded throughout the semester, so don't worry if any (or all) of the aspects of producing a smart, interesting piece of radio seems overwhelming to you!

One of the great benefits of being in a FIG is that your three courses should work together toward the development of more sophisticated, interdisciplinary understandings of core concepts. My job is to help bring the courses (and the ideas) together. In creating your radio piece, you will be drawing on themes from your cultural anthropology course—specifically, I'm interested in whether and how the broad issues of culture and cultural communities are connected to your personal experiences. You will also draw heavily from what you learn in your radio production course. In fact, your final project for the two classes are the same (so they better be good!) It's my hope that you will bring the content from cultural anthropology and the process from radio production to the creation of a piece of radio that expresses your understanding of self for a public audience.

As I said before, we will explore three core concepts over the course of the semester:
Identity: What do we mean by the term "identity"? How has it been defined in various fields? How can we operationalize the idea so that you can use it in creating your pieces? We'll focus on identity in the first third of the course.
Literacy: What does it mean to be literate in the 21st century? Specifically, what are "the new literacies"? What does it mean to think about reading and writing not just in terms of text but in terms of the various media we interact with every day?
Representation: What is a representation? Why is representation significant in our understanding of identity and literacy? What are the key features of a "good" representation?

Required Texts:
There is one required text for the course: Côté, J. E. & Levine, C. G. (2002). *Identity formation, agency, and culture: A social psychological synthesis.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

All other course readings are currently available on the course website. If there is enough interest, I will create a printed course packet that will be available for purchase.

Course Requirements:
Attendance & Participation: Class attendance is required; a considerable amount of information will be covered during class time that cannot be found in the course readings. In addition, since much of this class will include different group discussions, work, and activities, your presence and contribution in this group is crucial.

Post-Class Reflection: Over the course of this term, you will complete three reflections, 1-2 pages in length. You should make one entry for each big topic from the course (identity, literacy, representation). They can be posted on the class website any time, but the closer in proximity you write them to the completion of an activity or topic, the better off you will be. You have the option of either initiating a discussion thread or responding to someone else's thread. The reflections will be graded based on completion and the depth of your thinking. The best way to prepare for these writing exercises is to complete assigned readings before class and participate in the classroom discussions.

Representing the Other Assignment: Due in class the week of 9/14. I'll explain in class on 9/9.

This American Life Project: There will be several project milestones you'll need to meet over the course of the semester. I will describe them briefly here, but we'll also talk about each milestone as it approaches:

What do you want your story to be about? – This will be the first chance you get to think through what you want your piece to be about. While I am not expecting a profound, finished piece of writing, the more in-depth you are able to describe your idea, the better feedback you'll get from me and the sooner you'll be able to see who is interested in similar ideas. *Due 9/22 by 5pm.*

Pitch – Everyone will be expected to "pitch" or sell their story idea to the class and to a small panel of experts. You will prepare a short oral presentation (you can use visual and/or aural aids if you choose). *Due in class the week of 10/12.*

Interview questions & outline – You should draft a list of questions you will ask the people you are planning to interview. It may help at this point to create a basic outline of what you envision for the overall structure the story. This should include ideas about music, who you want to interview (and why), and what other sound might be included. If you're working with a partner, this should be completed together. *Due 10/28 by 5pm.*

Story board progress – Once you've completed your interviews, collected sound, and found music, you'll need to assemble a story board that describes how all of this work will be put together into a complete story. You should have a general idea of timing as well (e.g. how many seconds/minutes for each piece of audio you want to use). This should be submitted with your theme group and you should also include how the pieces will come together. *Due 11/23 by 5pm.*

Final piece – Your final audio file will be due to me on the day of our scheduled "final exam": *Due on 12/22*. However, this will not be the end of our journey. I plan to create podcasts of your work and find outlets for sharing them, both via the web and on the radio. I would also like to host a few nights of listening parties for you to invite friends and family to hear & discuss your work. I think it would be best if we did this after the holidays so that we can pick days/nights and times that work for the most people. More on this as we get to know each other. You will not be "graded" on these public sharing opportunities, but it's my experience that the pride of creating a piece of work that people you know (and don't know) can appreciate and enjoy is worth more than a letter.

Assessment: Grading breakdown consists of the following:

	Points toward final grade
Attendance & participation	20
Post-class reflections	20
Representing the other	10
Project (50 points total) Story idea Pitch Script outline Story board Final piece	 5 10 10 10 15
Total possible points	100

Special Accommodation: I intend to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. If you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course, please contact me so that I can enable you to fully participate. I will do my best to maintain the confidentiality of the information you share with us. Contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center for more information on resources and policies (http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu).

Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism: I expect all students to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty throughout the course. Anyone involved in dishonest academic behavior will receive a failing grade and will be reported to the Dean of Students. See the Student Handbook or http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct.htm for further information on academic misconduct.

This project has student groups use Augmented Reality and Interactive Storytelling (ARIS) open source software to document aspects of student culture, taking photos, recording audio, and making commentary. Students then write individual papers reflecting on their fieldwork.

Tim Frandy
Folklore 100

ARIS Fieldwork Assignment and Reflection Essay

***Overview**:*
You will be working in groups of 4-5 students to electronically document 3 important aspects of student culture at UW-Madison using an iPad and an ARIS game. Each group will briefly document (using video, audio, and photography) one place, two stories, and a folk art or craft that you feel are important or telling within student life at Madison. This assignment will bring you to "the field" right away and help develop your skills as fieldworkers and cultural analysts. It will also expose you to ARIS games and provide the experience of working with larger sets of fieldwork compiled by the multiple perspectives of multiple fieldworkers.

***Timeline**:*
September 12: Groups of five will be assembled in class on Wednesday. These groups will be organized loosely according to one's class (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior). By separating into these different groups, we hope to be able to explore how the campus experience changes as one acclimates to campus life and student culture. Each group will be issued an iPad at this time.

September 12-21: Each group will decide what and whom to document, and go out to the field to do so. On the iPad, open the App, ARIS, and create a username and password for your group to share. Then search for the game titled "Folklore 100 (F12)." If you click on Map, you will notice that there are three characters on the map: Tim, Meg, and Becca. Go talk to Tim (either by "meeting him" on Bascom Hill or by using the map's "quick travel" feature), and he will explain how to document a place. After you successfully document a place, Meg will tell you how to document a story, and Becca will help you document a folk art. These three quests must be completed in order (place, stories, folk art).

To document a place (or story or folk art), first go to the place you would like to document. In ARIS, click on the notebook feature. Add a Note, and use the camera icon to take photos and video, the microphone to record audio, and the text to write commentary. I strongly encourage you to be creative in your documentation, and do more than the bare minimum to complete the quests! For each of the three quests, you will need to 1) *Upload* the appropriate media; 2) *Write* a short analytical text explaining how your fieldwork is important within student folklife; 3) *Share* each note with "both" the map and the list; 4) *Tag* each note with the keyword *place (or Stories/Folk Art)*, your year(s) in school, and any other appropriate tags that describe the content of your documentation (ie, tradition, performance, group); then leave at least *2 comments* on the posts of other students. Only then can you move on to the next part of the assignment.

A quick note:
We ask that you avoid documenting events that center around alcohol, drugs,or other illegal activities. Though these activities are a very real part of university culture across the country and much of the world, we have found that these topics produce poor final projects for a variety of reasons. It's best to look for other activities to document for the purposes of our class.

Places:
Folklorists often talk about the difference between space and place. Space refers to a physical space, and place refers to the ways that humans interact with the space and with other people to create interpersonal meanings which are encoded into that space. As a place, for instance, Bascom Hill is not simply a hill. It is a place where undergraduates have labored up (and complained about walking up) for over a century. It is a place to be seen, for public displays, for activism, and for play in the shadow of a serious institution.

Your group needs to identify one such place in Madison that has some important meaning to student folklife. It could be a favorite place to study, to unwind, or to socialize. It could be a favorite cafe, venue to hear music, or shop. It could be a favorite green-space on campus, an important campus marker, or destination. Take at least one still photo and one video of this place that illustrates how it is important to student *folk* culture. You might want to consider including an interview clip in your video, if you cannot otherwise easily record a video that showcases the place's importance. After *recording* and *uploading*, write a short analytical *text*, *share*, *tag* with the term "place" (and other relevant tags), then *comment* on two other posts.

***Stories*:**
Stories have long held great importance to folklorists. A century ago, folklorists were largely concerned with myths, legends, and fairy (magic) tales. Nowadays, folklorists also look at other genres of oral tradition: personal anecdotes, jokes, chants, children's rhymes, and urban legends. Stories often reveal crucial information about the teller's values, belief systems, and worldview, and they are tools used to negotiate values with other individuals.

For this task, your group should record two stories, one using only audio and one using video. Each story should reflect some aspect of student folklife: perhaps a tale of one's first experiences participating in a campus tradition, a story that reflects the struggles of cooking in the residence halls, or a macabre story about Science Hall. After *recording* and *uploading*, write a short analytical *text*, *share*, *tag* with the term "stories" (and other relevant tags), then *comment* on two other posts.

Folk Art: Folk art is a broad term that encompasses arts and crafts designed for use (canoe paddles, rag rugs, furniture) and traditional decorative arts (textiles, clothing, jewelry, or wall-hangings). Folk art is usually taught outside institutions, and the art is more likely to be used than hung on the wall, yet folk art is every bit as full of symbols and meanings as so called "high art."

For this task, your group needs to document *one* folk art within UW student culture, using photographs and/or video. This could be a knitter, a jewelry-maker, a woodworker. It might involve tattoos, specially ornamented backpacks, or the placing of a stocking cap and scarf on the statue of Abraham Lincoln. It might be helpful to think of folk art as a relationship between the *product, process,* and *people*. For instance, the materials used (natural vs. synthetic) or the process (old-fashioned vs. reliant on new technologies) will tell us a great deal about the meanings within the folk art. Once again, after *uploading*, write a short analytical *text* commenting on the relationship between the folk art and student culture, *share*, *tag* with the term "folk art" (and other relevant tags), then *comment* on two other posts.

September 28: Reflective Essay due. Review the fieldwork collected by each group on Place, Stories, and Folk Arts. You can review using the ARIS game using the iPad. You can also access player Notes online at http://arisgames.org/server/services/v1/samples/viewPlayerCreatedNotes.html?gameId=4363. Be sure to take note of the group's year in school as you watch these videos.

Each student will use this data as the basis of a 5-page essay. This essay should have four sections:

1) *Identifying Information*: Very briefly provide the names of your group members, and indicate the titles of the Notes you created.

2) *Content Analysis:* What observations can you make from this data set about self representations of student life on the UW-Madison campus? How does the understanding of campus life change as one transitions from a Freshman to an Upperclassman? How does your own group's documentation parallel and differ from the documentation of other groups? What do the differences suggest about both the ethnographers and the interviewees? Which fieldwork surprised you the most and why? Be sure to provide detailed and specific examples which back up your claims!

3) *Presentation Analysis*: Which interviews, videos, and photographs within the entire class are the most successful? Explain why they are effective. Which of your own group's videos and photographs are the most successful and why? Which of your group's videos or photographs has the most room for improvement and why? (Don't worry: fieldwork is an improvisatory art, and it's absolutely normal to make mistakes).

4) *Group Process*: Briefly reflect on the group process. Was the work divided fairly, and did group members perform the tasks they committed to do? Did group members attend all scheduled out-of-class meetings? What did you take away from this experience working with a group? This information will remain confidential.

***Grades*:**
Fieldwork and participation (group): 50 points
Reflective essay (individual): 50 points

Students in this senior-level course for majors write periodic posts to the course blog analyzing weather events. Using a blog allows students to compile maps quickly and to display animations with their writing.

Professor Steve Ackerman
Tim Wagner
Atmospheric and Oceanic Studies 441

A COURSE BLOG WITH STUDENT ANALYSES OF WEATHER EVENTS

Background:

Sometimes we gave students an explicit assignment, and other times we let students find an interesting topic to present. Either way, students wrote their blogs with a detailed rubric in hand.

We controlled when the blog became visible to the entire class. Students would post a draft (though not publicly) by a certain date, and we would go online and make comments about the current posting as well as make suggestions for students to consider in their revisions. Students would then address those suggestions before the publication date.

After the blog was published, students from the class could see each others' work, and the professor and TA could point to good examples during subsequent class sessions.

To see student blog entries:

The class blog with students' entries is available online—http://profhorn.aos.wisc.edu/blog1/

AOS 441: Mountain Wave Case Studies

Due before Friday Class

The object of this exercise is to reinforce what you learned about McIDAS-V and interpreting features in water vapor images. You will do a blog to demonstrate your knowledge of interpreting imagery from a GOES satellite. You will do one of three case studies:

- Feb 4 2003 – Virginia region (GOES 12)
- March 6 2004 – Colorado region (GOES 12)
- March 9 2009 – Nevada region (GOES 11, 12, or 13)

Include an appropriate title and any authors involved in the study.

Use McIDAS-V to analyze satellite data for your case study. Using at least 2 GOES channels, locate and discuss the mountain wave feature.

Explain how you estimated the size of the feature and any potential deficiencies in your methodology. In your short write-up include:

- A GOES water vapor image that highlights the cloud feature you're analyzing, including an animation. Include a brief description of the scene you are viewing.
- Include a legend that relates gray shade (or color scheme) to brightness temperature.
- Include ancillary data that you used to describe and explain the wave feature.

In your blog, also:

- Describe the approximate brightness temperature difference in the banded regions (dark and light areas) in the water vapor imagery.
- Estimate the approximate size, wavelength, and propagation of the wave. Compare the wind speed with the wavelength of the wave structure. (The forecasting rule of thumb is the wind direction is along the wave pattern. The velocity of the winds in a mountain wave can be estimated by: $V=6\,w + 12$; where w is the wavelength in miles of the waves, and V is the wind velocity [in mph]).
- Explain how the banded structures in water vapor imagery are generated.
- Remember to include the *four 'W's* in your blog (When, Where, Wavelength and Wresolution)

For this short writing assignment, Professor Fielder asks her students to write blog posts in which they apply course readings and concepts to make an argument about a pair cultural artifacts. This assignment give students the opportunity and incentive to read and comment on their classmates' work, while deepening their thinking about the course's topics.

Professor Brigitte Fielder
Comparative Literature and Folklore Studies

KEYWORD AND POPULAR CULTURE BLOG POSTS IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE 203

Post #1 must be completed by Friday, March 4th
Post #2 must be completed by Friday, May 7th

This is a course in which the realm of literary studies and cultural studies merge. Over the course of the semester, we'll make important connections between our assigned readings and popular culture past and present. I encourage you to make your own connections to popular culture throughout the semester, from your own encounters with things related to American Girls and American Girlhood in popular culture and their potential connection to our class' readings and discussions.

This informal writing assignment asks you write a blog post in which you use your understanding of any single term from the *Keywords for Children's Literature* assigned readings in order to compare some aspect of American Girlhood in any of our other course readings (i.e., the fictional stories we're reading, whether American Girl books, short stories, or novels) to some "Cool Thing" (a video clip, an image, a news story, a song, an advertisement, whatever) from popular culture today. (See the following page for details on how to access and post on our course blog.)

During lecture and section discussions, we'll discuss our keywords readings and we'll make use of our shared understanding of these terms as we discuss our other course readings. I'll also provide some examples of how one might put contemporary Cool Things into conversation with our other course readings.

You will write **two** blog posts for this course. You must choose a different keyword for each post, and you must choose a different course reading and Cool Thing to compare for each post. While you must complete one blog post by the midway point of the semester and your second by the end of the semester, (see exact dates above), please feel free to post earlier than this, whenever you find a Cool Thing that merits comparison with our keywords and one of our course readings. This will allow class members to comment on blog posts throughout the semester, as well.

Your analysis should include a thesis statement that expresses your main point of comparison (e.g., "In Text A, the idea of "keyword" is represented as doing X, while in Cool Thing B, "keyword" is represented as doing Y" or "Both Text A and Text B focus on representations of "keyword" in a way that shows XYZ." You don't have to follow these formulas exactly, but your post should contain these elements.) *See Professor Fielder's example posts for reference on what posts might look like.

Each blog post should be about a paragraph long, or ½ a single-spaced typewritten page.

* For **extra credit**, during both the first and second half of the semester, you may comment on your classmates' blog posts, adding to the conversations they've started. (Comments will be worth one point each, up to 5 extra points on the midterm and final exam, respectively). Comments can be brief, even just one or two sentences, but these should be substantive. That is, they should make their own specific argument or addition to the conversation, beyond mere agreement or disagreement with the original post. Your professor and teaching assistant will provide some examples of comments, as well.

In this online course, as students engage in internship experiences, they share their experiences and learning with fellow students online. Students write focused reflections and respond to one another in an online forum.

Professor Greg Downey
Inter-LS 260

SHARING INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES THROUGH WRITING ONLINE

Half of all college graduates report completing at least one internship during their time as students. This online course provides a way for College of Letters & Science students who have found exciting outside internships to earn academic credit in connection with their work experience.

Students will analyze their professional training experiences in the high-tech workplace in the context of the goals of a liberal arts and sciences university education, by practicing critical reading, writing, and observation skills.

A diverse variety of L&S professors teach this class over the course of the fall, spring, and summer terms. See the Inter-LS 260 online course page for more information: http://interlsinternship.pbworks.com/w/page/20058673/INTER-LS%20260

Grading

While working for various individual outside organizations as paid or unpaid interns, students will come together online to:

1. Read a series of scholarly articles (available at our online Reading Repository) on the intersection between liberal education and professional practice;
2. Produce a shared wiki of organized field notes on their work site and training experiences, responding to issues in those scholarly articles;
3. Converse and comment on other student wiki pages in order to discuss internship experiences and reactions to the articles;
4. Read and discuss one academic book connected to their field site, chosen by the professor; and
5. Write a final paper (minimum 2000 words, the equivalent of 8 pages typed and double-spaced) relating their work experiences, the scholarly articles, and the book they have read to the broader themes of the course, to be posted on the shared wiki as part of the student's overall "online portfolio."

Final grades will be based on:

1. Wiki-based fieldnotes and article responses (25%)
2. Collaborative discussion of fieldnotes and articles (25%)
3. Summary of the book you have read (25%)
4. Final written paper (25%)

The internship is graded on the normal A-F system.

Sample Summer Calendar for Inter-LS 260

Orientation Meeting: Before the end of spring semester—Wednesday, May 4, 3:30pm

All students registered for the class by the end of April should plan on attending a one-hour orientation meeting at L&S Career Services (Middleton Building). If you cannot attend this meeting, or if you add the class after the end of April, please contact L&S Career Services to obtain the materials from this meeting.

Your individual internships all vary in terms of their start and end dates, but for consistency in course management, we'll start our academic work on the first day of the eight-week summer session. Although the academic course officially runs through the eight-week summer session, student internship work with the employing organization does not have to coincide with those dates (nor would we expect it to).

Getting your book

The professor will assign you each a book to read that relates to your field placement, and will post that book selection to the "Instructors and Students" page of the wiki (see above).

Week 1 of 8: Getting Started

Putting your page on the wiki

1. If you're reading this page, you've successfully received an emailed invitation to join our course wiki!
2. Go to the "Instructors and Students" page of the wiki
3. You should see your name listed in a big table on the "Instructors and Students" page. Using the "EDIT" button at the top of that wiki page, add a link from your name to **a new wiki page of your own** (more instructions on that page)..

4. Set up this personal wiki page with a short **description of yourself**—your name, major, hometown, etc.
5. See if you can use the PBWorks instructions and help system to figure out how to **add a photo of yourself** to your wiki page.
6. Make sure to SAVE your page after you've edited all of your personal information.

Describing your organization

1. Each week you will add detailed field notes to your wiki page. But first, you should name and describe the organization that you're interning with.
2. Once again, go into EDIT mode using the button at the top of your own wiki page.
3. In bold text, type the **name of your internship organization** below the description of yourself that you entered above.
4. Now add a brief **description of the organization** where you're interning to your wiki page. If you can, describe the mission, purpose, audience, and history of your organization. Use headings to organize this information in a nice format.
5. You should probably write **at least 250 words** of description.
6. Make sure to SAVE your page after you have entered this description.

Writing your fieldnotes

1. Now you're ready to enter your **first week of field notes**. (Even if you've been interning longer than a week by now, just write all of your reflections so far in this first weekly entry.)
2. Start editing your page again.
3. Type a heading like "Fieldnotes—week of June 13" and then describe in as much detail as you can what your duties, experiences, and reactions were during your first week of interning.
4. Try to write **at least 300 words** and capture your experience in some detail. The more you write now, the more raw material you have at hand for your final paper at the end.
5. You are expected to engage the readings in your fieldnotes. By focusing on a specific passage or other aspect of the readings, you'll be able to reflect more deeply on your internship experience. Make sure to SAVE your page after you have added your first week of field notes.
6. **You will need to write fieldnotes at the end of every week of your internship through the end of the semester.**

Important Guidance for Writing Your Fieldnotes—Read This!
Your fieldnotes are part of a semi-public communication system between you, the instructional staff, and the other students. Learning to write in an open and professional manner, while paying proper respect to others and their opinions, is an important skill which we hope you will acquire through this course. This professionalism includes incorporating the articles and essays that we're reading each week (see #5 above). Get specific. Quote the text and discuss it, perhaps by saying how the assigned reading does or does not reflect your internship experience.

Ideally, your fieldnotes will be of use not only to you, but also to your fellow students, whose internships may differ substantially from yours, and who may find your experiences instructive as parallels or contrasts. Above all, focus in your fieldnotes on the advice you would give or insights you would share with another prospective employee in general, as well as a strong area of reflection for yourself.

With that in mind, if you are involved in a politics-related internship, refrain from using this wiki as a platform for making political statements but instead focus on your experience. There are plenty of venues on the web for expressing political views; this wiki is for building your professional competence in the area of your internship.

Comment and collaboration

1. Visit a fellow student's wiki page (note: the page of someone IN your section) and comment on the fieldnote experiences or reading reactions that he or she describes. (You don't have to EDIT their pages to do this; just use the "comment" field at the bottom of their wiki page.)
2. Your comment needs to be at least 200 words each week. If you like, you may write two 100-word comments to multiple students, rather than one 200-word comment to a single student. (And no, before you even ask, you may not write a 10-word comment to each of twenty students. The comments are meant to be substantive.)
3. You will need to comment on other student fieldnotes every week of the summer session. And we will be expecting to respond to the comments and questions that others leave on your page. In short, we're looking for you to use this space of comment/response to establish conversation and collaboration. You should feel free to comment on the pages of students not in your particular section, but your instructors will be keeping track of the comments you make inside your section only so please make sure to do that first.

Online readings

1. Robert Emerson, Rachel Fretz and Linda Shaw, "Writing up fieldnotes I: From field to desk," *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (1995), 39-65.
2. Robert Emerson, Rachel Fretz and Linda Shaw, "Processing fieldnotes: Coding and memoing," *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (1995), 142-168.

Week 2 of 8: A liberal education and the world of work

Online readings

Read at least ONE of these articles in detail so you can write about it within your field notes.

1. William Cronon, "'Only connect...': The goals of a liberal education" *American Scholar* (1998); 6 pages.
2. Mark Edmundson, "On the uses of a liberal education: As lite entertainment for bored college students," *Harpers* (September 1997); 11 pages.
3. Robin Marantz Henig, "What is it about 20-somethings?" *New York Times* (18 August 2010).
4. Michael Levin, "Ethics 101 for interns," *Bloomberg Businessweek* (11 December 2009).
5. Tamara Draut, "The growing college gap," in James Lardner and David A. Smith, eds., *Inequality matters: The growing economic divide in America and its poisonous consequences* (2005), 89-101; 10 pages.

Fieldnotes and reading response

1. Create a section for this week's fieldnotes on your wiki page as before, and describe your experiences in as much detail as you can.
2. Incorporate some ideas from at least one of this week's readings into your field notes.
3. **Your fieldnotes need to be at least 300 words each week.**

Comment and collaboration

1. Visit a fellow student's wiki page and comment on the fieldnote experiences or reading reactions that they describe.
2. **Your comment needs to be at least 200 words each week.**

Week 3 of 8: The geography of the workplace

Online readings.

Read at least ONE of these articles in detail so you can write about it within your field notes.

1. Marc Bousquet, "Students are already workers," in *How the university works: Higher education and the low-wage nation* (2008); 30 pages.
2. Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in America* (2002), selection.
3. Don Peck, "Early career moves are the most important," *National Journal* (08 May 2010).

Fieldnotes and reading response

See Week 2 instructions

Analyzing office geography

1. On your wiki page, describe the **geography** of your internship setting, both outside and inside, including spaces for work, meetings, storage, and relaxation. What's your place in this geography? Write at least 250 words about the spatial organization of your workplace.

Comment and collaboration

1. Visit a fellow student's wiki page and comment on the fieldnote experiences or reading reactions that they describe.
2. **Your comment needs to be at least 200 words each week.**

In an online course offered by the English Department, instructor Brandee Easter designed three different writing activities including discussion posts, weekly writing assignments, and a final paper, to promote students' critical thinking about the course material and to help students generate and organize ideas for formal papers. Below, you will see contextual information about the course followed by tips from the instructor and samples of the writing activities.

Brandee Easter
English 142: Mystery and Crime Fiction Online

THREE KINDS OF WRITING ACTIVITIES IN AN ONLINE COURSE

Summer 2017 and 2018 (8 week format)
Adapted from Professor Caroline Levine

Course Description for Students
Imagine that you come upon a dead body. How do you figure out how it got there? What if there are no eye-witnesses? What if witnesses are lying? What if the evidence has been tainted or planted? Maybe someone is acting oddly, or has a strong motive. Do you leap to conclude that that person is the killer? If you make a mistake, a killer could go free and an innocent person be jailed for life. How do you *know* for sure that you have arrived at the truth?

Just like the detectives you've seen on TV, you're going to run into lots of questions in your own life that can't be answered by just asking an expert or by searching for answers on Google. In this class we'll think about how and why popular culture became obsessed with the pursuit of knowledge. We'll think about how fictional detectives model the work of distinguishing truth from lies. They'll introduce us to a whole range of strategies for finding knowledge, from ballistics to psychological analysis and from teamwork to guesswork. We'll think about who gets to pursue knowledge, and how they do it. And we'll read about historians, philosophers, and scientists who have taken the fictional detective as their model for gathering knowledge and think about how in the University we all need to act like detectives.

Course Format Description for Students
This course is conducted *entirely online* through Canvas. All work can be completed asynchronously, and you never need to be available at a certain time. All due dates are designed to be completed flexibly with your schedule, and you should plan ahead when necessary to meet them all. However, this course *cannot* be completed early, so you should be available all eight weeks of the term. For more on due dates, look to our course schedule below.

The Instructor's Reflection on Writing in English 142
One of the main challenges—perhaps *the* main challenge—of adapting English 142 (a large lecture literature course enrolling 160 students) into an online format was figuring out what to do about the writing. Because it was taught entirely through D2L and then Canvas, writing's centrality to the course was inevitable, and this brought both possibilities and constraints. At first, the amount of writing that was required to meet the course goals seemed like a struggle. Course goals that are usually accomplished through in-person discussion, conferencing, or collaborating instead needed to be developed through writing, and this demand on both TA and student labor adds up quickly. Instead of being frustrated, I approached the course's writing as an opportunity for reflection, analysis, and skill building throughout parts of the course that normally wouldn't have had the benefits of writing, while still being mindful about writing's challenges for instructors and students.

There are three main writing components to this course: two 4-5 page essays, weekly writing assignments, and weekly discussion posts. (The course also included weekly reading quizzes and video lectures.) I've also included assignment goals, assessment criteria, and rubrics, which were incredibly important for communicating across the platform, the courses, syllabus and schedule, and some miscellaneous tips learned.

Other Tips from Instructor Brandee Easter:

Tips about the labor of writing
The increase of writing in this class meant an increase in TA and student labor, and this raised big questions about how to provide an equitable experience to English 142's offline version if it involves such an increase in writing. Here are some strategies and approaches used to help manage this:

- **Canvas rubrics**: To cut TA labor, we used Canvas's rubrics, which are built in for quick grading. Using this system, Canvas will calculate the points allowing the grader to only need to click on the boxes the assignment is fulfilling
- **Conferences**: Requiring brief one-on-one conferences twice through the semester provided the opportunity for verbal, instead of written, feedback and guidance.

- **Less is more**: Weekly writing assignments were built to take no longer than 30 minutes, and each one was focused on a particular skill, which allowed most assignments to be a paragraph or even a few sentences.
- **Preparing students early**: Because the class was 8 weeks, students were asked to begin thinking about major essays very early. Writing assignments were shorter or eliminated on weeks longer papers were due.

Tips for communicating clearly
I found that communicating expectations and goals for the course and its writing were amplified by the online format, and these are a few strategies that helped me to be clear in setting expectations, providing feedback, and helping students feel in control of their writing.

- **Consistent schedule and assignments**. Every week, including writing assignments and due dates, were structured the same way. The calendar in the syllabus (on page 18) was important for setting these expectations and being clear about how much time the course is expected to take.
- **Consistent feedback**. Grades scheduled to return regularly each week. Both instructors and students needed to follow deadlines.
- **Include goals, rubrics, and examples with the prompt.**

Sample Discussion Posts

Discussion was formatted in 3 parts, due Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of each week, that asked them to respond to a prompt as well as each other. Students were divided into groups of about 5 for these.

Format

Part 1: Answer the week's prompt in 150-250 words, including one direct quote from the readings to support your idea. This post should be entirely independent from any other and should think beyond repeating material from lecture. ***Due: 11:59PM Wednesday***

Part 2: Once everyone in your group has written an initial post on Wednesday, respond to at least one of your classmate's ideas by asking questions, adding evidence, strengthening arguments, or pushing back. This response should be 100-200 words. ***Due: 11:59PM Thursday***

Part 3: Return to your own post and consider the questions and feedback from your classmates. Compose a final 100-200 word response that engages with their ideas, such as by expanding or revising your original idea. ***Due: 11:59PM Friday***

*****We included these instructions with every week's prompt so that expectations were clear*****

WEEK 5

Both *The Wire* and *The Private Eye* significantly revise the detective fiction genre. They are unlike many of the texts we've studied so far in this class. For your discussion posts this week, you'll need to reflect on one particular way that *The Wire* or *The Private Eye* does not fit with the conventions of detective fiction.

In **part one (due Wednesday at 11:59PM)**, you'll need to:
(1) Identify a convention of the detective fiction genre. In order to answer this question, you can think about the protagonist, antagonist, other characters, imagery, temporal frame, setting, themes, plot, point of view, tone, etc. of the detective fiction that we've read so far.

(2) Note at least one text that we've read or watched in previous weeks (this means works other than *The Wire* or *The Private Eye*) that includes this convention.

(3) Explain how *The Wire* or T*he Private Eye* revises or changes this convention. In order to illustrate your claim, cite a particular scene from one of these texts.

(4) Finally, explain the "so what." Answer this question: Why did the author(s) of T*he Wire* or *The Private Eye* decide to make this change?

In answering these questions, do not repeat ideas that lecture has already covered. When answering question four, your answer should relate to the meaning of the text. Try to figure out what kind of argument the text is trying to make about detective fiction itself or some other theme. Avoid answers that claim that the authors made a certain choice so that the text would be more enjoyable, exciting, or that there is some practical reason for the change, since these answers do not relate to meaning.

Part Two (due Thursday at 11:59PM): Respond to someone else's post. You can either ask a clarifying question to further unpack their reading, provide more evidence for their reading OR provide (and close read) counter-evidence to challenge their reading.

Part Three (due Friday at 11:59PM): Your third post should respond to someone's response to your original post.

Discussion Rubric (built in Canvas and clickable for quick grading)

Criteria	Ratings				Pts
Discussion	Excellent: An excellent discussion post is specific, original, and fully answers the prompt. It uses evidence from the text to support its claims, and it does not repeat lectures. Excellent responses thoughtfully engage with peer's work, offering both affirmation and productive disagreement, supported with evidence and offering insightful observation and questions. 10.0 pts	Good: A good discussion post mostly answers the prompt. It will use some evidence from the text, though it may not offer much originality. Good responses attempt to push conversation further, though they may not offer much more insight than the original post. 8.0 pts	Poor: A poor discussion post doesn't answer the prompt fully and does not provide enough textual evidence. It may only repeat lectures and be vague. Poor responses are short, unthoughtful, or unproductive. 5.0 pts	Incomplete: An incomplete discussion post is either not completed or attempted. Incomplete responses are either not completed or inappropriate. 0.0 pts	10.0 pts
Total Points: 10.0					

Sample Weekly Writing Assignments

Because face-to-face instructional time for writing skills, which are often part of lectures or sections were lost, I developed short writing instructional videos (about 5-7 minutes) and weekly writing assignments for practicing those skills. These assignments asked students to practice prewriting, planning, evidence gathering, and analysis toward their specific chosen essay prompt. It was also important that these were also graded pass/fail because the point was to provide the opportunity low-stakes practice, feedback, and preparation for the longer essay. These also served as an important check-in for instructors, and TAs and I adjusted these weekly assignments each week in response to student needs. For example, one week's assignment to begin drafting a thesis statement revealed that many were not yet developing an argument-driven statement, so the following week's assignment was built to specifically address this need.

Weeks 5-6 (building toward Final Paper)

WEEK 5: Prewriting

This week's writing assignment asks you to brainstorm and begin working toward the claims you'll make in your final paper. Review the final paper prompt options and think about which ones might be the most interesting to you.

Then, choose ***two*** of the three prompts and write short answers to the following, for each.

1. What about this prompt is interesting to you? Why might you choose this one for your paper?

2. Which books, articles, television, etc from the class would you use for evidence?

3. Referring back to Week 2's writing assignment on making claims, draft a possible thesis statement.

You should submit these answers ***for two possible prompts*** by Friday at 11:59PM.

WEEK 6: Outline
Using feedback from your TAs on last week's thesis statements, choose which claim you would like to develop in your paper. Then, use this week's writing assignment to help you plan and organize your argument. Here is a short video explaining the MEAL plan: ______.

The MEAL plan is a tool for organizing the body paragraphs of argument-driven papers. The acronym stands for the parts that every body paragraph needs to have. (Note that this structure does *not* apply to your introduction or conclusion.)

M - Main Idea - The claim being made in the paragraph, or the topic sentence.

E - Evidence - The research, data, quotes, etc that prove your main idea. For a literary analysis paper, this means the evidence from the text, including quotes as well as paraphrasing of scenes or moments, that support your claim.

A - Analysis - The explanation for how evidence you've presented proves what you think it proves. ***This is the most important part of a paragraph. You should spend just as long, if not twice as long, on analysis as you do evidence.***

L - Link - A transition that either connects back to the thesis or to the next paragraph's main idea

For this assignment, create an outline of your paper testing out this format for your body paragraphs. The goal is to give you a roadmap and give your TA the ability to give you good feedback before drafting.

Short Writing Assignments Rubric (built and clickable in Canvas for quick grading)

Criteria	Ratings				Pts
Short Writing Assignments	Excellent: An excellent assignment is specific, original, thoughtful and cites the text when necessary. It fully answers all parts of the prompt and demonstrates a strong understanding of course readings, lectures, and concepts, but does not merely repeat them. 10.0 pts	Good: A good assignment mostly answers the prompt, but may not be as specific or original. It may lack some textual support (when required). It mostly demonstrates an understanding of course readings and concepts, but may not offer much insight beyond lecture. 8.0 pts	Poor: A poor assignment doesn't answer the prompt fully. It may be general, unspecific, or lacking citations (when required). This assignment may misunderstand some course readings or concepts or parrot lectures. 5.0 pts	Incomplete: An incomplete assignment is either not completed or attempted. This assignment may fundamentally misunderstand course readings or concepts. 0.0 pts	10.0 pts
Total Points: 10.0					

Final Paper

Length: 4-5 pages
Due: Friday, August 11, 11:59PM CT

This semester, we have thought about how the genre of detective fiction changes over time. Authors have drawn upon previous stories, plots, and conventions, but they have also introduced new elements. We've also talked about how detective fiction is reflective of the culture that produced it. In this essay, choose one of the following concepts and explore it through *at least three detectives (in three different texts) and four exact quotations*, investigating how this concept works and changes in the genre, *being mindful to push your thinking beyond what is discussed in lecture.* In other words, this paper should be more than scissors-and-paste thinking from lecture. It should involve you asking and answering your own questions.

The weekly writing assignments will help you complete this assignment and are designed as steps toward the paper. Pay attention to your TA's feedback each week for help developing this paper.

#1 STRUCTURES OF POWER: The detectives we have studied this semester operate within widely differing structures of power (nations, governments, bureaucracies, race, gender, social relations and stratifications, etc). Choose three texts from the course and explain how the power structures surrounding the detective affect the ways in which those detectives gain knowledge and access truth.

#2 TRUTH: We have explored the ways and types of knowledge detective fiction can help us access, but we have also considered the limits of the genre to help us know. Choose three texts from the course and make an argument about this strange paradox of detective fiction. Can detective fiction help us find knowledge and truth? In what ways? Where does it succeed and where does it fail?

#3 EMOTION: Detective fiction has often debated the value of emotion and feeling in the process of knowledge gathering. Some have excluded emotion from detection, while others have suggested that emotion is a crucial part of knowledge. Make an argument either for or against emotion as a valuable part of the process of gaining knowledge and determining the truth, using three of the texts we have read this semester to support your argument.

Requirements

Your paper must have the following

- 4-5 pages in 12pt Times New Roman, double-spaced
- At least ***four*** exact quotations from ***three*** different detectives (in three different texts)

Goals
- Show your firm and precise understanding of the course
- Think deeply about course concepts and themes and push beyond lecture

Grading Rubric
- *Argument and Persuasiveness (40%):* This paper presents a focused argument, stated clearly in a thesis statement. Every claim in the paper should be supported by convincing textual evidence. Each piece of evidence should be thoroughly analyzed and explained.
- *Comprehension and Application of Course Material (40%):* Paper should demonstrate an understanding and engagement with the course readings, especially by pushing ideas beyond those covered in lecture. Paper shows original thinking and application of the course material.
- *Clarity, Organization, and Presentation (20%):* Paper should contain a thesis, and each paragraph should address one main idea. Paragraphs should logically connect to each other. Paper should be correctly formatted and proofread. All quotes are properly cited.

Coaching Students to Succeed with Assignments

Here are some suggestions, based on research and experience, for improving your students' writing—and for improving the experience you have assigning, reading, and responding to it.

HELPING YOUR STUDENTS TO IMPROVE THEIR WRITING AND THEIR LEARNING

While many of these principles and techniques take time to implement, and some may be logistically impossible in large classes, they have proven successful here and at many other schools in courses across the curriculum. Few of us could employ all of these suggestions, but it is valuable to consider which might be useful for your courses.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND OPTIONS

1. Frontload your efforts.

   To help students succeed and to help them learn, invest more of your time in designing assignments, in helping students understand how to write the kind of paper you're asking for, and in responding to early drafts of their work rather than in writing extensive comments on finished papers. Research shows (as do the stacks of unclaimed papers outside professors' offices at the end of each semester) that our comments on final versions of papers too often go unread or are poorly understood.

2. Integrate writing assignments into your course.

   Remember that writing assignments can do much more than test what students know; they can help students learn the subject matter and the ways of thinking central to a course. Thus, writing assignments work best when they match the overall goals of a course. Make sure that what you're asking students to do in a paper is something the other activities in your course prepare them to do. For example, course papers typically ask students to analyze something, to come up with an original argument and to support it with evidence from a text, to explain contradictory findings, to identify a researchable question, or to develop a theory. Students are much more likely to succeed with papers if they have heard you explicitly modeling these kinds of thinking in class, seen and discussed how they work in course readings, and, better yet, practiced doing these kinds of thinking in class.

3. Set high standards and communicate them in advance.

   Talk with your students about how important writing is in your course—and why it's important. Share and discuss a written version of your evaluation criteria; make them as specific and clear as possible.

4. Use informal writing assignments to help students generate and experiment with ideas for more formal papers.

   The shallow thinking we find in some of our students' papers often occurs because students spend too little time exploring and questioning ideas before they commit themselves to arguing a particular point. Journals, brief in-class writing, freewrites, responses to lectures and readings—these types of informal, ungraded writing can give students the opportunity and the freedom to explore and to identify promising topics worth writing about and ideas worth developing in a paper.

5. Especially in more advanced courses, design assignments that lead students to higher-order thinking within your discipline.

   Ideally, writing assignments encourage students to develop their ability to think like a member of your specific discipline. Define what you believe are the primary skills of a physicist or sociologist, for example. Then discuss these ideas with students and design assignments that offer opportunities to develop these skills. You might, for example, want to have students in advanced classes do some theoretical and speculative writing.

6. Assign several shorter papers, rather than a single longer one.

   Students often learn more from writing regularly throughout a course, and their writing improves with each successive assignment.

7. With longer, more important papers, set draft dates, give feedback on drafts, and have students revise.

   The best student writing, just like the best faculty writing, results from the hard work of revision. Because research shows that many of the papers undergraduates submit to us are first drafts, you may want to build revision into your assignments by setting a draft due date a couple of weeks before a final due date. To ease the paper load, you might reduce the number of pages or papers due in the semester, thus focusing on a series of revisions.

   You can also emphasize the process of good writing by breaking longer, more complex assignments into their component parts, providing feedback along the way. For example, for a research paper, set a deadline for tentative research questions, an annotated bibliography, a draft, and a final revised version. To save time, you can respond to only the first page or two of each student's draft, suggesting one or two main ways it can be improved; in this way, you can also identify those students who need more help.

8. **Make your expectations clear in a written version of the assignment.**
It's important to remember that in their different courses your students face very different types of assignments and widely varying expectations. Moreover, students typically approach your writing assignments in ways that have helped them succeed in the past. The clearer you can be about what you want from students, the better they'll be able to adapt to your writing assignments and meet your expectations. You'll want to specify the manuscript and documentation formats that you want students to follow. In addition, let students know what you expect them to do in the paper. If, for example, you want papers organized around a central arguable thesis—a conclusion students have drawn about a question—say so in the assignment and try to pose a question that leads students to take a stand.

9. **Specify an audience for the paper.**
So many of the choices we make as writers depend on our sense of our audience and its needs (just think of how difficult it is to plan a talk or paper for an audience you don't know). Even if the audience is the class, specify that in the assignment and briefly discuss the implications of writing for that audience.

10. **Assign a group paper.**
This kind of assignment reduces the number of papers you have to read and grade. In addition, having students work together generally provides for a blending of strengths that results in more thorough research, more effective arguments, more creative thinking, and improved writing.

GETTING STUDENTS STARTED ON ASSIGNMENTS

11. **Discuss your assignment during class.**
In-class discussion allows you to elaborate on your expectations, gets students thinking about the paper, emphasizes its importance, and gives students a chance to ask questions. You can start such a discussion by asking several students to explain how they might go about interpreting the task you've assigned and to discuss options they see for approaching the paper. The class as a whole can then consider both the strengths and weaknesses of given approaches to an assignment. You can also require students to come to the next class meeting with questions about the assignment.

12. **Introduce students to the type of writing (a literature review, a lab report, a book review, a research proposal) that the assignment requires.**
Discuss, in class, professional publications or successful sample papers written by students in the same course in previous semesters. Students learn much more about writing successful papers and meeting your expectations from examples than they do from abstract injunctions to "have a focused argument," "use sources responsibly," "link studies in a literature review," or "synthesize multiple points of view." To save time, discuss brief excerpts, but be sure to review at least a couple of different samples, ones that take different approaches or argue different points. Otherwise, it's easy for students to conclude that there is one right way to do the paper and to please you. Be sure also to talk through the samples and to explain what works well and why; you might even want to annotate the sample to illustrate and explain what's working well.

13. **Teach students how to use sources responsibly and how to avoid plagiarism in their writing.**
It is far better to address this subject while students are writing their papers rather than to have to deal with problems once they have occurred. The Writing Center's handout on quoting, paraphrasing, and acknowledging sources can help.

14. **Give students an opportunity during class to talk about their plans for a paper.**
Ask them to share the question they're trying to answer in their paper or a rough version of their main point, and encourage them to ask questions of each other. Sharing ideas in progress and hearing what others are planning to do in a paper not only motivates students but also helps students generate new ideas at the crucial formative stage of writing a paper.

HELPING STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS OF WRITING

15. **Have students participate in peer reviews.**
In pairs or small groups, in or out of class, students can respond to each other's drafts. The suggestions they make to their peers can improve the revised versions you eventually receive, and the experience of reviewing someone else's draft can improve students' abilities to criticize and revise their own work. You'll want to provide some guidelines for peer review, ones that match your evaluation criteria. To model the process of peer

review, you may also want to lead a full-class review of a sample paper in progress.

16. Hold individual conferences with students to talk about drafts of their papers.

    Many teachers find that holding conferences is no more time-consuming than reading drafts and commenting in writing. And having conferences may be the single best way to improve the quality of the final papers you receive. How long a conference needs to be depends on the length of the paper, the complexity of the issues you're discussing, and the particular student, but a conference typically lasts twenty minutes or so. You can make conferences more efficient by having students, in advance, evaluate their drafts in order to identify issues to discuss with you; by reading only the first couple of pages of the draft and skimming the rest; and, above all, by remembering that your goal is not to identify and solve every problem in a draft but to suggest one or two main ways in which the draft can be improved through revision.

17. Encourage all students to take advantage of Writing Center instruction.

    The Writing Center has 45 experienced writing instructors available to meet with your students individually as they are working on course papers. Writing Center instructors can help students generate and organize ideas, and they can provide a critical response to a draft, pointing out possible problems and offering advice for revision. Try mentioning the Center on your assignment sheet. Better yet, you can have a Writing Center instructor make a brief (5-minute) presentation about our services in your class. To arrange such a presentation, call the Writing Center at 263-1992, or email a request to writing@wisc.edu.

18. Help students see that problems (in reaching a conclusion, organizing part of a paper, defining a research question, etc.) are an essential part of thinking and writing.

    Less-experienced writers often try to avoid problems instead of wrestling with them and recognizing them as an inherent part of the writing process and as opportunities for arriving at new, more complex insights. In conferences and in written comments, point students to the potential of their work in progress. In class, you can model this process by discussing the problems and potential in a sample draft.

19. With their final versions of assignments, have students submit drafts, peer review comments, and their previous papers for the course.

    This allows you to expect and evaluate progress, emphasizes the stages in the process, and encourages students to see themselves as developing writers.

RESPONDING TO STUDENTS' PAPERS

20. When you respond to students' papers, resist the urge to comment on everything.

    More is not necessarily better in this case. Research shows that students are often overwhelmed by voluminous comments and, thus, miss our main suggestions. First, emphasize the strengths of a piece of writing (praise is a great motivator), and then identify one or two main ways in which a piece of writing could be improved. It's important to tie your comments to your evaluation criteria and to the specific demands of the assignment. And it's crucial to be specific about how and where the paper succeeds or fails. Consider holding conferences to discuss your responses because, without discussion, written comments on paper are often ignored or misunderstood.

21. Don't waste time responding extensively to minimal efforts.

    If you suspect that a paper is the result of hasty or careless work, or if it's way off the mark in responding to the assignment, your time is probably better spent meeting with the student to discuss the situation. Ask for a revision rather than trying to "fix" the misconceived first effort.

22. When you return papers, take some class time to share and to discuss examples of

    Discussing even excerpts from successful papers honors some of the best writers and encourages a natural modeling that helps students set and achieve higher goals for their future work. (Of course, you'll want to ask the student-authors' permission before doing this.)

successful work.

23. “Publish” some student writing. You can create a copy-shop packet of students’ papers, which both current and future students in your course can buy and read. By broadening the audience for students’ writing, this kind of publication casts student-writers as experts on their subject matter and encourages them to do their best possible work.

Surveying students early in the semester helps you assess their abilities and interests as well as identify potential challenges (e.g., a student with little university writing experience). Learning about your students' backgrounds can help you tailor your course to build on students' strengths and meet their needs.

David Ebenbach
Psychology 225

STUDENT INTRODUCTION SHEETS

1) Name:

2) Section (circle one): Early or Late

3) Major:

4) Year in School:

5) Special Needs:

6) Are you in psychology research lab? Yes or No? (circle one) If so, whose lab?

7) What experience do you have using the library (finding journals, using the computers, etc.)?

8) What experience do you have writing (Comm-A or Comm-B courses, writing in classes, high school, extracurricular)?

9) What are some of your interests?

10) What areas of psychology do or do not interest you?

11) How do you feel about this class? Hopes? Concerns?

12) What kind of book could you write?

* *

Beth Godbee
English 201

Name:
Email:
Phone:
Major and Year in School:

What other courses are you taking? Are you working or involved with extracurricular activities?

What experience do you have with writing (Comm-A, other Comm-B, writing in classes, high school, extracurricular activities, etc.)? What do you write on your own? For instance, do you chat online, keep a journal, or email friends? What has been your experience with writing in school?

What experience do you have with research (using the library, finding journals, searching online, conducting interviews, making observations, distributing surveys, conducting experiments, etc.)?

In the past, have you asked peers, tutors, or friends to review your writing? Who (if anyone) have you used as a "second reader"?

How do you feel about a lot of ink (i.e., feedback) on your papers? What types of feedback have you found particularly helpful or unhelpful in the past?

What do you enjoy the most or least about writing?

Please use the back of this sheet if you need extra space or would like to share other information. ---->

Writing Across the Curriculum's Stephanie White, in collaboration with UW-Madison's McBurney Center for Disability Resources, describes some common challenges for both students and instructors when teaching writers with disabilities. She offers some practical suggestions for coaching writers with disabilities to succeed.

Stephanie White
Writing Across the Curriculum
McBurney Center for Disability Resources

Coaching Writers with Disabilities to Succeed

For some writers with disabilities, these disabilities may be visible, such as a physical impairment. For others, these may be invisible, such as a learning disability. Either way, writers with disabilities may face unique challenges when it comes to writing assignments, and instructors may not always know the best ways to coach them. The National Council of Teachers of English emphasizes that it is vital to ensure full inclusion of students with disabilities, regardless of these challenges:

> We acknowledge the right of full inclusion for all members of society. Full inclusion for people with disabilities means moving beyond narrow conceptions of disability as a flaw, deficit, or a trait to be accommodated.… Educators should ensure that alternatives for those with disabilities are built into physical and intellectual spaces, rather than "added on" in ways that segregate and stigmatize those with disabilities. Making writing classrooms and curricula inclusive and accessible to those with disabilities means employing flexible and diverse approaches to the teaching of reading and writing to ensure pedagogical as well as physical access; using multiple teaching and learning formats; welcoming students with disabilities in course syllabi; and including disability issues or perspectives in course content and faculty development workshops.[1]

While every situation is different, and we cannot make blanket statements about how to best coach writers with disabilities, it's useful to think about some common challenges students and their instructors may face in these circumstances. In addition, it's helpful to consider some best practices for teaching writers with disabilities. It's vital, however, to remember that every situation is unique and will require its own flexible approaches.

Common Challenges for Writers

- Writers with disabilities may have difficulty organizing their thoughts and ideas during the writing process.
- They may have difficulty accessing a standard keyboard and mouse.
- They may have difficulty monitoring their writing for errors in spelling, grammar, or word order.
- They may have difficulty producing legible handwriting.
- They may have difficulty sustaining endurance and attention during the writing process because of a health condition or medication side effects.
- They may have difficulty completing research for longer writing assignments. For some writers, materials may not be available in an accessible format. Other writers may struggle with the large volume of materials they need to read and organize during the research process.
- They may have difficulty producing writing under timed circumstances or meeting deadlines.

Common Challenges for Instructors

- Instructors may not know which writers have disabilities, and that can make it challenging to be of help. In some cases, writers may choose not to disclose their disability, which is their right.
- They may not feel qualified to facilitate learning for writers with disabilities.
- They may be unsure of whether a student isn't meeting expectations due to a disability or due to other factors.

Best Practices

To address some of these challenges, there are a number of approaches instructors can take. The Office of Disability Services and the WAC Program at the College of Staten Island-CUNY explain that "research shows that students with disabilities benefit most from explicit instructions and pre-writing activities." The following approaches, adapted from CSI-CUNY's WAC program, can be effective for teaching writers with disabilities. The original document can be found at www.csi.cuny.edu/wac/fs/faculty_resources.html.

In the same way that buildings designed to be accessible to people in wheelchairs are equally useful for people pushing strollers, so courses designed with writers with disabilities in mind are also beneficial for all students. These universal design practices can help all of your students more effectively use writing to learn.

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[1] http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/disabilitypolicy

1. Include a statement about the McBurney Center for Disability Resources in your syllabi.

The McBurney Center offers examples of such statements, which can be copied or adapted from this site: www.mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/examplesofsyllabusstatements.doc.

2. Give both written and verbal writing prompts and instructions.

When instructors explain an assignment in class, expectations are clearer for students with learning styles that favor the spoken word. When instructors explain assignments in writing, expectations are clearer for students who learn best when looking at text. Using both approaches helps more students understand the assignment.

3. Ask students to paraphrase the writing prompt and instructions.

When students verbally explain or jot down the requirements of the assignment in their own words, their brains switch into an "active" mode and they are likely to begin to think about ideas for their writing, how they will organize their work, and what they need to do to complete the piece. Pre-planning may help students with many types of disabilities work steadily on the assignment and can help students feel less anxious about writing.

4. Let students know from the beginning how their writing will be graded.

When they work on writing, students benefit from knowing their instructor's tangible goals for their work. One way to communicate these goals is a rubric or list of expectations included with assignment instructions. There are multiple examples of such rubrics and grading criteria in this sourcebook.

5. Show models of finished assignments when giving initial instructions.

Having a model to emulate may help students feel more confident to start their assignments sooner, leaving more time to organize and revise their work.

6. Break longer assignments into smaller steps, providing feedback along the way.

Receiving regular feedback at multiple stages in the process of researching, organizing, writing, and revising longer assignments can help students with disabilities feel more confident that their work is on track. These checkpoints help break the work into manageable segments that students can use when they set goals for their work throughout the semester.

Common Accommodations for Writers with Disabilities

In addition to observing the best practices above, faculty can provide academic accommodations to student writers with disabilities as recommended by the McBurney Disability Resource Center. These may include:

- Extending deadlines for writing assignments
- Extending test-taking time for essay exams
- Permitting the use of a computer for essay exams
- Providing large-print handouts and visual aids

The McBurney Center may assist student writers with disabilities by providing adaptive technology such as speech recognition, concept-mapping, and screen-reading software and modified keyboards.

Contact the McBurney Center:

www.mcburney.wisc.edu/

702 W. Johnson Street, Suite 2104
Madison, WI 53715

(phone) 608-263-2741
(text) 608-225-7956
(fax) 608-265-2998

These four tips help instructors take steps to make their courses—particularly writing assignments—as accessible as possible for the unique learning styles of students with and without disabilities.

Elisabeth Miller
Writing Across the Curriculum

Developing an Accessible Learning Environment

According to the US Department of Education, 11 percent of undergraduates enrolled in 2- and 4-year colleges and universities report some form of mental, physical, or emotional disability. That number is likely significantly higher given students who are not diagnosed, do not disclose their disability, or choose not to seek out accommodations.

Moreover, both students with and without disabilities undoubtedly have a variety of preferred learning and participation styles—from being visual learners to having trouble with aural comprehension to preferring active or kinetic modes of learning. Here are four tips to develop an accessible learning environment for all students, an approach to teaching that's often called Universal Design:

1. Using writing to make classroom discussion accessible.
Many students may have difficulty determining when or how to enter classroom conversations and anxiety may prevent them from meeting oral participation requirements. Consider inviting students to write and submit questions or responses before class, or give students time in class to write and submit responses. These brief, informal pieces of writing open up another communicative channel and make more room for participation.

Professor Margaret Price, in *Mad at School: Rhetorics of Mental Disability and Academic Life*[1], suggests alternating between both oral and online discussions during class time. She explains that "Taking part in a synchronous discussion that does not require one to 'jump into' an oral/aural conversation can benefit all students, particularly those for whom the timing and social pressures of face-to-face situations are difficult to navigate. I have used course-management software and also free 'blog' spaces (WordPress and LiveJournal) to construct spaces that enable both synchronous and asynchronous discussions" (93).

2. Using informal writing to provide additional opportunities for participation.
To encourage thoughtful, focused interaction with course material for all learners, Price suggests requiring that students annotate course readings with their own "ideas, questions, and interpretations as [they] read" (237). Annotation, for Price, can happen through any method that students prefer: writing on the page, typing in another document, writing on Post-It notes, or tape-recording ideas.

Whatever method students employ, they annotate for responses to each paragraph of a reading (stating their confusion, agreement, and alternate interpretations), authors' sources of evidence, and structure of articles. They end annotations by writing two-or-three sentence summaries of the readings, paraphrasing the article's argument, and writing down a few questions.

3. Respecting and promoting a range of writing processes.
Be aware that there is no "one-size-fits-all" writing process. The value of outlines and putting thoughts in a linear fashion before writing may hinder, rather than help, some students. Idea-mapping may simply not make sense to some learners. Consider giving students a menu of options for their writing process: outlines, idea-mapping, rough notes, "zero" drafts, reverse-outlines (See "Reverse Outlining" in this section), and more.

Various writing strategies will also work for different students. Gender and Women's Studies Professor Eunjung Kim at UW-Madison reports success with "setting up a time and space for students who have trouble writing to come in and write in the presence of others." Writing Center sessions, "retreats" with reserved time for drafting, or other groups may also help support students' process.

4. Inviting students to talk with you about their needs.
Finally, be sure to encourage writers with disabilities and students who have various learning preferences to come talk with you about their needs. Include an "Accessibility Statement" or "Inclusion Statement" early on in your syllabus inviting students with and without documented disabilities to talk to you and to seek out resources from UW's McBurney Disability Resource Center. For excellent suggestions on how to craft your syllabus statement, see Shannon Madden and Tara Wood's "Suggested Practices for Syllabus Accessibility Statements" at http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/praxis/tiki-index.php?page=Suggested_Practices_for_Syllabus_Accessibility_Statements

1. Price, Margaret. *Mad at School: Rhetorics of Mental Disability and Academic Life.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011.

Greta Krippner offers explicit advice for introducing students to the discipline of sociology. Specifically, Krippner offers guidance for coaching students to make a sociological argument, find a sociological research question, and read quantitative journals.

Greta Krippner
Sociology

MAKING A SOCIOLOGICAL ARGUMENT: ORIENTING STUDENTS TO A NEW FIELD

"Of course the method of presentation must differ in form from that of inquiry." (Karl Marx,1867)

Introduction

Once you have developed a viable research question, your next task is to review the evidence in order to formulate an answer to your question. The answer to your question is your thesis, or your *argument*. Typically, researchers do original research at this point—they analyze statistical data, go to the field, administer surveys, conduct experiments, etc. We don't have time for that in the course of one semester, so we will use *existing research* (also called secondary research) as evidence. Even though we are not collecting our own data, the logic is the same—you will use data (collected by others) to support your position. This does not mean simply parroting another researcher's results; the unique (and creative!) part of your research project comes in assembling evidence from a variety of sources.

So, for example, you may want to argue that birth order does not provide a good explanation of (conservative) social attitudes. You are taking the same position that Freese et al. do, but while you will report their findings, you will not limit yourself to their research. Rather you will look for other researchers who have considered the relationship between birth order theory and social attitudes. How do their findings compare with the findings of Freese et al.? If they are also arguing against birth order theory, they support your argument, and you will include their findings as additional evidence in support of your position. If they contradict Freese et al.'s position, you will also include them in your discussion, but here your task is to explain why Freese et al.'s findings are more persuasive.

Perhaps you want to take another tack not by arguing for or against birth order theory with respect to a specific outcome *per se*, but rather by comparing how birth order theory "performs" as compared to the standard sociological variables (age, race, gender, etc.) across a variety of social outcomes. Perhaps Freese et al. convinced you that birth order is not a good predictor of social attitudes, but does birth order do a better job predicting other social outcomes, including education, achievement, personality, etc.? In this case, you would still present the findings of Freese et al. as evidence about the effect of birth order on social attitudes, but then you would go on to examine research on birth order and education, achievement, and personality.

Keep in mind the difference between summarizing and making an argument here. You are not merely summarizing Freese et al.'s paper; you are using their findings to make your own argument. The distinction is tricky, because making an argument requires you to summarize the research of others, *but for your own purposes*.

Two Strategies for Making a Sociological Argument

What you do in your argument depends a great deal on how your question is framed. Generally, there are two different tasks you can take on in making a sociological argument:

1. Establish a relationship between two or more phenomena (variables).

This is the mode of sociological thinking/argumentation we have stressed most in class. We have already discussed several questions that involve this kind of argument:

Example 1: Does birth order affect social attitudes?

Example 2: How does co-habitation prior to marriage affect the probability of marital success/stability?

Example 3: Is low voter turnout explained by the educational levels of the population?

Each of these questions asks about a presumed relationship: does a relationship exist between cohabitation and marital success? Between birth order and social attitudes? Between voting and educational levels? Presuming that the variables are measurable, these sort of questions lend themselves to quantitative analysis: most of the relevant evidence will be of a statistical variety. Where variables aren't measurable, though, qualitative research may be used to establish a relationship.

Example 4: Do families with only girl (or only boy) children exhibit more closeness?

This question is again asking about a relationship between variables: does the quality of family interaction (i.e., “closeness”) differ in families with all-girl (or all-boy) children as compared to families where the children are mixed-gender? Note that “closeness” is a subjective characteristic, and not easily measured. Very likely, then, research on this topic will be qualitative.

Regardless of whether the research you are using is quantitative, qualitative, or a mixture of both, if your question is about establishing a relationship then your argument will generally involve adjudicating contradictory findings. You will find research that both supports and contradicts the existence of the relationship you are assessing. You must first decide, based on all the evidence you have reviewed, where you come down on the issue: are you persuaded that the posited relationship exists? You will then systematically make a case in support of your position, citing the relevant findings as evidence. You will also discuss findings that contradict your position, explaining why you find them less credible. Eliminating alternative explanations is an important component of making a *convincing* sociological argument. More on this in a moment. . . .

2. Establish a mechanism.

We haven’t talked about this a lot in class, but there is another type of research question in sociology. These are “how” and “why” questions—rather than attempting to establish (and quantify) a relationship between two variables, this kind of research question is oriented towards explaining how something works or why a particular phenomenon is occurring. These are questions about process. Often (but not always!) qualitative research is better suited to addressing process questions than quantitative research.

Example 5: What explains the recent influx of Latino immigrants to the United States?

Example 6: Why aren’t third parties successful in the United States?

Note that this kind of question can’t be expressed as easily or naturally in the language of independent and dependent variables. This difficulty reflects the fact that while this type of question does specify an “outcome” (dependent) variable (e.g., Latino immigration, third party success), independent variables (causes) are left open.

The task here is to provide a plausible explanation for an event. The relevant evidence may be more institutional or structural than statistical in nature. For example, in order to explain the influx of Latino immigration, relative levels of socio-economic development in the United States and Latin America might be relevant to your argument. Perhaps political events in Latin countries in recent years, or changes to U.S. immigration law are important. Here the task of constructing a sociological argument consists of weighing these factors in order to determine which are most important. As before, you will want to consider and eliminate alternative explanations. If you believe, for example, that the most fundamental reason for third party failure in the United States is the structure of campaign finance laws, then you may want to argue against an alternative (contradicting) explanation for that failure, such as the position that the existing two-party system effectively meets the needs of a wide variety of Americans.

Finally, note that some arguments accomplish both of these tasks: they establish a relationship and posit a mechanism. For example, research on the cohabitation question could first establish that there is a relationship between cohabitating prior to marriage and marital success and then try to explain how that relationship works. Does cohabitating allow couples a “trial” period in which to determine if they are truly compatible prior to marriage? Does it enable couples to negotiate difficult issues before committing to a permanent relationship? Does cohabiting provide couples an opportunity to practice interpersonal skills that, once acquired, strengthen the marital relationship? Establishing a relationship and explaining how the relationship works will often involve combining quantitative and qualitative research.

Making Your Argument Convincing

Your goal is to convince a skeptical reader of the correctness of your claim. Some things to keep in mind:

1. Making a sociological argument involves selecting and prioritizing key factors or causes from a multitude of possible factors or causes. A paper in which you argue that everything under the sun is related to your problem is not particularly useful or informative. Instead, your task is to simplify a complex reality by telling the reader which factors or causes are *most* important for a given phenomenon you are trying to explain. It is not your task to be exhaustive; it is your task to convince readers as to what is most central. So, for example, “Residential segregation is a key cause of urban poverty,” is a stronger, more interesting claim than, “Social, political, and economic factors contribute to urban poverty.” In general, strong (specific) claims are preferable to weak (non-specific) ones.

2. However, if your claim is too strong for you to defend with believable evidence, you are better off backing down to a thesis you can squarely defend with the available evidence.

3. Use the facts, figures, statistics, interview data, etc. of other researchers to support your points. Don't just recite the claims that others make based on their data, show the evidence behind their claims.

4. Depending on your question, you may want to introduce and refute counter-arguments or alternative explanations. This strengthens your claims, because instead of allowing the reader to come up with counter-arguments, you are saying, "you might be thinking my thesis isn't true because of x, well let me tell you why it's true *despite* x." By eliminating alternative explanations, you are heading off your critics at the pass.

5. The quote from Marx is intended to remind you that while the process of working out your argument is (necessarily) messy, the *presentation* of your argument in your paper shouldn't be. In other words, avoid writing your paper as a blow-by-blow of your thought process while you were working out your argument. Rather, in writing, you begin where you ended in thought—with a clean, concise statement of your argument. You then use your argument to guide and structure the paper. We will deal more specifically with organizational issues in sociological writing in a few weeks.

Finding a Research Question

The research paper assignment is an opportunity for you to make an *informed* argument about a sociological problem of your choice. In selecting a research question, you should pursue something that is of interest to you that you wish to learn more about. The only restriction on your choice is that there must be some sociological research done on the problem as you will be drawing on the extant research in defining and defending your thesis (i.e., your main argument).

Notice that I have been using the words "problem" and "question" and not "topic." This is deliberate. A research topic is a very general statement of an area for investigation. A problem or a question is much more focused: it suggests a circumscribed area of debate, not a general field of knowledge. You will start with a topic, but in order to complete the assignment successfully, you must move from a topic to a research question or problem. This is not easy to do, but the following guidelines may help you.

1. Ask a question concerning differences between individuals, groups, roles, relationships, societies, time periods. Remember the dictum: no comparison, no information.
2. *Ask a question that cannot be simply answered yes or no.* A proper sociological question should suggest a debate that is still open. A question that can answered definitively, once and for all, is not likely to be very interesting to sociologists.
3. *Ask a question that has more than one plausible answer.* Your task in this paper is to make a case for your position; you can only do this effectively if the other possible positions are real, viable alternatives. Avoid making your argument by setting up straw-man opponents.
4. *Make sure there is data on your question.* This is important. There are many wonderful and interesting questions that have not been studied by sociologists. But for the purposes of this course, you are constrained to working on questions on which you can find a body of published work.
5. *Make sure your question is answerable in the space allowed.* You have 10-12 pages to make your case. You should break your question down into something that is tractable in a short paper.

So, you will start with a topic, something of interest to you. If you aren't sure where your interests lie, take a look at the reading list for the course and make a note of the book on the syllabus that most intrigues you. You may want to read this book ahead of schedule. Once you have decided on a general area, go to the library and search the topic. Find some preliminary articles and read them. A review article on your topic, if it exists, may be especially helpful in laying out general debates. You can peruse the *Annual Review of Sociology* for review pieces. As you become more knowledgeable on your topic, you will be able to formulate various possible questions for research. You should choose the question that is most interesting to you, most tractable, and for which you can find material.

To help students brainstorm ideas for a final research paper, instructor Sarah (Frankie) Frank uses this handout for an in-class reflection exercise. After students answer the questions in the gray boxes, Frank asks students to find connections between their responses. To push students' thinking, she poses questions like "Can you imagine different combinations of your responses to make a research question?" This exercise helps students narrow and specify their interests.

Sarah Frank
Sociology 210: Survey of Sociology

CONCEPTUAL MAP EXERCISE FOR A RESEARCH PROJECT IN SOCIOLOGY 210

What are you most passionate about?

1.
2.
3.

What about current society excites/energizes you?

1.
2.
3.

What about people fascinates you?

1.
2.
3.

What are your academic interests?

1.
2.
3.

Given your responses & reflection on the surrounding questions:

What about human society would you most like to understand?

____

____

____

What historical phenomenon do you find most interesting?

1.
2.
3.

What about current society concerns you?

1.
2.
3.

What topics do you most enjoy reading about?

1.
2.
3.

What topics do you most enjoy talking about with others?

1.
2.
3.

Students may do a good job of coming up with a suitable thesis or argument, but how can instructors help students to move beyond the obvious or the ordinary? In this handout, instructor Tisha Turk shows her students what she's thinking as she reads their ideas to help them understand reader expectations.

Tisha Turk
Women's Studies 101

FROM TOPIC TO THESIS

A well-constructed thesis statement helps hold an essay together by showing the reader where the paper is going to go. It defines not just a paper's topic but its argument, and introduces the kinds of evidence or mode of reasoning that will be used to back up that argument. It does not merely summarize the points that will be made; rather, it shows the relationship between those points. A thesis may need to be more than one sentence in order to do all these things; it may turn out to be a "thesis cluster" rather than a "thesis statement."

As we all know, "construct an argument" is easier said than done. Many papers merely *describe* texts in the introduction rather than articulating a specific thesis that makes an argument about those texts. Sometimes the paper simply hasn't foregrounded an argument that shows up elsewhere in the paper. Sometimes the paper makes lots of good individual points without figuring out the relationship between those points, so that the thesis is more like a list than an argument.

In order for us to examine what an argument actually looks like and look at some ways we can push on a topic to get to one, I've provided a couple of sample take-home essay prompts and a series of increasingly specific thesis statements or clusters (based on past student essays) addressing those questions. I've included some commentary on each sample thesis so you can get a sense of what kinds of questions (mostly "why?" and "how?") I ask when I'm reading.

Example: Assignment #1
Analyze hooks and any other two authors we've read in terms of their use of the concept of denaturalization. What behaviors or beliefs do they denaturalize, and what specifically do they hope to accomplish by doing so? You may also consider negative examples, in which an author fails to denaturalize a behavior or belief that is historically or culturally situated.

1. hooks, Mackler, and Sepanski all address the issue of denaturalization.

Well, yeah. The question assumes that the concept is relevant to some of our readings. I need to see the paper make a *claim* about the essays in relation to the concept.

2. hooks is successful at denaturalizing certain behaviors; Mackler and Sepanski are not.

Okay, this is starting to look more like a thesis; there's a claim being made about the authors' success at doing the denaturalization thing. But I want more specificity: what are the "certain behaviors" being denaturalized?

3. While hooks successfully denaturalizes the idea of women as inherently non-violent in her essay "Feminism and Militarism: A Comment," Carolyn Mackler's essay "Memoirs of a (Sorta) Ex-Shaver" fails to denaturalize the idea that women are hairless, just as Diane Sepanski's essay "The Skinny on Small" fails to denaturalize the idea that women are quiet.

Much better, because now I know what the issues are that we're going to be discussing. But: what are the criteria for "successful denaturalization"?

4. Using hooks' argument that "the personal is political," denaturalization should be seen as a complex process that involves acknowledging the stereotyped behavior, personally overcoming it, and, ultimately, collectively resisting the stereotyped behavior in the political arena. While hooks successfully denaturalizes the idea of women as inherently non-violent in her essay "feminism and militarism: a comment," Carolyn Mackler's essay "Memoirs of a (Sorta) Ex-Shaver" fails to denaturalize the idea that women are hairless, just as Diane Sepanski's essay "The Skinny on Small" fails to denaturalize the idea that women are quiet.

Aha! This explanation of denaturalization is especially sharp because, while totally in line with the concept as discussed in class, there's actually an extra claim embedded in it: denaturalization can be usefully connected with the idea that "the personal is political." (Incidentally, the author was able to come back to this connection in the essay's conclusion and offer further commentary on its importance—a strategy that made for an interesting and effective final paragraph that didn't just reiterate the intro.) I think the thesis could still be pushed further, though; I want to know how Mackler's and Sepanski's projects fail to meet the criteria that have been established, and whether they fail for similar reasons.

5. Using hooks' argument that "the personal is political," denaturalization should be seen as a complex process that involves acknowledging the stereotyped behavior, personally overcoming it, and, ultimately, collectively resisting the stereotyped behavior in the political arena. While hooks successfully denaturalizes the idea of women as inherently non-violent in her essay "feminism and militarism: a comment," Carolyn Mackler's essay "Memoirs of a (Sorta) Ex-Shaver" fails to denaturalize the idea that women are hairless, just as Diane Sepanski's essay "The Skinny on Small" fails to denaturalize the idea that women are quiet. Both Mackler and Sepanski begin the process of denaturalization in that each author shows the transformation of her own consciousness, but their actions have not yet fully contradicted the stereotypes of which they have become aware.

Yup, I'll take that. I'm not entirely sure that I actually agree with this argument, but the logic behind it is clear and sound and has been effectively presented. Now, of course, the rest of the essay has to follow through on this argument and do the actual work of proving the claims, but since the thesis cluster sets up such a specific set of criteria for analyzing and evaluating the essays, it should be fairly easy to check back and answer the question "is the essay really doing what I said it was going to do?"

Example: Assignment #2
As Toni Morrison wrote in *Beloved*, "The definitions belong to the definers, not the defined." This quotation suggests that control is exerted not only through physical and economic means but also through representational means. How does capitalist patriarchy maintain representational control of women? How do women participate in and/or resist this control? Discuss using one essay from Coward or Rapping and two other essays by authors of your choice.

1. Our society's beauty standard has been fostered by men's control over the appearance of women's bodies in movies and photography.

Well, this is a claim, but it's one that's kind of hard to disagree with because it's not very specific; it also doesn't let me know which essays will be used or how they're going to fit into the discussion.

2. Coward explains that our society's beauty standard has been fostered by men's control over the appearance of women's bodies in movies and photography. Grealy and Hooper resist that control.

Better. But why Grealy and Hooper? We read lots of essays—why are these the important ones for this argument?

3. Coward explains that our society's beauty standard has been fostered by men's control over the appearance of women's bodies in movies and photography. Grealy and Hooper resist that control because they suffer from disabling and disfiguring diseases such as cancer, and thus cannot possibly meet that beauty standard.

Okay, so there's a crucial similarity between those two authors. But *how* do they resist?

4. Coward explains that our society's beauty standard has been fostered by men's control over the appearance of women's bodies in movies and photography. Grealy and Hooper resist that control because they suffer from disabling and disfiguring diseases such as cancer, and thus cannot possibly meet that beauty standard. These women have found peace and strength in their community, and I would like to assert that this may be a way that other women too can face up to the demands made on them by patriarchal representations.

As a thesis, this works okay. It's taking care of the control part of the question pretty quickly and focusing on the resistance part, which is fine—the important thing is that an argument is being made. But, because the idea of resistance is the focal point of the argument, I do think that the claim that other women can learn from Grealy and Hooper could be further emphasized.

5. By arbitrarily defining the "perfect" female body, men have convinced women of their view of what is desirable and beautiful in our society. As Coward explains, this beauty standard has been fostered by men's control over the appearance of women's bodies in movies and photography. We can find suggestions for resistance from women like Grealy and Hooper, who, because they suffer from disabling and disfiguring diseases such as cancer, cannot possibly meet that beauty standard. These women have found peace and strength in their community, and I would like to assert that this may be a way that other women too can face up to the demands made on them by patriarchal representations.

Rather than doing a comparison/contrast of the three texts, this argument draws on Coward to establish an answer to the initial question ("how does capitalist patriarchy maintain control of women?") and then analyzes two essays on similar topics to come up with a possible solution to the problem. The rest of the essay, then, needs to briefly summarize Coward and explain why her claims are compelling in order to justify the first part of its argument, and then go on to show that what women face as victims of debilitating diseases is analogous to what women face as victims of patriarchal control, and that therefore the strategies for dealing with one can help deal with the other.

Professor David Zimmerman uses this handout to teach his students how to write a well-developed thesis statement. His handout is an excellent model of the trial and error process of writing an argument or main claim in a writing assignment.

Professor David Zimmerman
English

CRAFTING A THESIS STATEMENT

Crafting a thesis is hard work. A successful thesis is typically the result of a long process of trying out different claims, selecting a few to refine and elaborate, and choosing an especially promising one to perfect. Here's an example of this trial-and-error process as it moves from first attempt to a developed thesis:

In "Benito Cereno," Herman Melville suggests

In "Benito Cereno," Herman Melville argues that

In "Benito Cereno," Herman Melville argues that black slaves are equally capable of political symbolism as whites.

In "Benito Cereno," Herman Melville shows how whites fool themselves if they think they alone possess the capacity to enact political theater

"Benito Cereno" exposes the racism that makes blacks the passive

In "Benito Cereno," the white

In "Benito Cereno," Captain Delano represents white Americans who confuse authority and power

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" is a powerfully subversive work. On first glance, it seems to

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" is a powerfully subversive work. It exposes the idiocy and blindness of white antebellum racists who imagine that black slaves are incapable of using political symbolism.

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" is a powerfully subversive work. It shows how keenly aware black slaves are of the strategies white slaveholders use to terrify and oppress them. At the same time, it shows how whites refuse to see

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" is a powerfully subversive work. It shows how blind white slaveholders are to the imaginative capacities of black slaves

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" is a powerfully subversive work. It shows not only that black slaves are keenly aware of the symbolic strategies white slaveholders use to safeguard white power, but also that black slaves can exploit these strategies to secure their own emancipation and authority over their masters.

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" is a powerfully subversive work. It demonstrates that black slaves are keenly aware of the symbolic strategies white slaveholders use to safeguard the slave regime. Moreover, it shows how black slaves are capable of exploiting these same strategies to secure their own emancipation and authority at the expense of their former masters.

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" is a powerfully subversive work. It shows how the very strategies white slaveholders depend on to safeguard their power over their slaves

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" is a powerfully subversive work. It studies how white slaveholders depend upon certain kinds of symbolic displays to safeguard their power and to make their authority over slaves seem natural. It shows not only how black slaves are keenly aware of the ways whites use these displays, but also how slaves are capable of exploiting these displays to fool their masters and to secure their own emancipation.

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" shows how ~~the blindness of~~ racist ideology can lead to its own subversion.

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" studies how the racist beliefs and stereotypes that white slaveholders rely upon to justify slavery make them incapable of recognizing slaves' desire and capacity for revolution. The story exposes how this insensitivity not only incites, but also enables slave revolution.

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" studies how white racism not only incites, but also enables slave revolution.

Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" exposes the racism, hypocrisy, and complacency of liberal abolitionists in the 1850s.

Instructor Sarah (Frankie) Frank provides this handout to her students when they complete their first drafts of a research paper outline. When talking with her students in class about refining their outlines, she encourages students to ask themselves how each new paragraph moves the paper forward and contributes to the thesis or argument. This handout demonstrates one way of modeling stages of the writing process for a longer research paper.

Sarah (Frankie) Frank
Sociology 210: Survey of Sociology

HANDOUT: FROM OUTLINE TO FIRST DRAFT

You've written an outline for your paper – now what? Ideally, you'll have written an outline that includes headings and topic sentences. Also, you should have a list of resources with annotations as well. Here's what you can do using the hard work you've already done.

Step 1: Refine the Outline:

- Make sure your topic sentences are strong and apply to your entire paragraph
- Write down the chief takeaway your readers should get from each paragraph

Example:

Title*: American TV Trends & Stress Levels*
Thesis: Sociological evidence indicates that people who watch a moderate amount of television per week have lower overall stress levels than those who watch too little or too much TV.

- Paragraph 1
    - Topic Sentence: Since the 1960s, American viewers have incrementally increased their television viewing time.
    - Takeaway: History of TV watching in the United States
    - Points:
        - Introduction of the TV
        - The TV as a family source of entertainment
        - Expansion of TV programs offered
        - Current TV watching trends

Step 2: Insert Sources

- You've done research and you will continue to find sources
- Organize your sources based on the headings of each paragraph
- Write the author and year (and possibly page number)
- This is a great place to include direct quotations

- Paragraph 1
    - Topic Sentence: Since the 1960s, American viewers have incrementally increased their television viewing time.
    - Takeaway: History of TV watching in the United States
    - Points:
        - Introduction of the TV
            - Marcus (2015)
            - Stemmer (2000)
        - The TV as a family source of entertainment
            - Julian (1984); Kissler (1997)
        - Expansion of TV programs offered
            - Schneider (2005); Loving (2009)
        - Current TV watching trends
            - "Emerging adults watch 55% more television (2000-2016) than they did from 1980-1999" (Marcus 2015:99)

Step 3: Source Details & Takeaways

- Using your annotated bibliography, write sentences in your own words or use direct quotations from the source and put them in your outline to fit the topic sentences

- Paragraph 1
  - Topic Sentence: Since the 1960s, American viewers have incrementally increased their television viewing time.
  - Takeaway: History of TV watching in the United States
  - Points:
    - Introduction of the TV
      - Marcus (2015)
        - The TV was first introduced into American families in the late 1950s
        - The majority of American families owned one television set by 1965
        - TVs were typically no larger than 20 inches wide and they were square in shape and design
      - Stemmer (2000)
        - For the first ten years of television, there were only 6 channels and few content options
        - Content was streamlined, so everyone in America was watching the same material at the same time
          - "Americans shared a cultural capital in that everyone owned a television and everyone watched the same shows each evening with their own family. This allowed TV to become a common topic of discussion amongst friends and peer groups," (Stemmer 2000:325).
    - The TV as a family source of entertainment
      - Julian (1984)
        - Television was the single largest source of family entertainment along with the drive through movie theatre until 1985 (p. 88)
        - The most popular family TV shows from 1950-1955 were "Leave it to Beaver" and "The Ed Sullivan Show."
        - Talk shows were introduced in 1962
      - Kissler (1997)
        - TV programming was censored
        - Programs like "Roots" in 1963 shocked the nation
        - When John F. Kennedy's assassination aired on TV, hundreds of people were hospitalized for shock and stress
    - Expansion of TV programs offered
      - Schneider (2005); Loving (2009)
        - Both authors cite the expansion of television in the 1990s for diverse audiences.
        - Schneider cites the introduction of pornography as vital to changing the way programs were marketed towards different age groups
    - Current TV watching trends
      - "Emerging adults watch 55% more television (2000-2016) than they did from 1980-1999" (Marcus 2015:99)

Step 4: Write!

- Now that you have a thorough and detailed outline, you can start the writing process
- Divide your page/word document by each paragraph so that you stay focused on one topic; your essay will stay coherent and well-organized this way
- This also helps you to see which authors you refer to, thus avoiding plagiarism

Since the 1960s, American viewers have incrementally increased their television viewing time. Television was first introduced into American families in the late 1950s. The majority of American families owned one television set by 1965. TVs were typically no larger than 20 inches wide and were square in shape and design (Marcus 2015). For the first ten years of TV in America, there were only six channels and few content options. Content was streamlined; everyone in America was watching the same material at the same time. Americans shared a cultural capital in that everyone owned a television and everyone watched the same shows each evening with their own family. This allowed TV to become a common topic of discussion amongst friends and peer groups," (Stemmer 2000:325). Due to its popularity and cultural value, television became the single largest source of family entertainment along with the drive-in movie theatre until 1985 (Julian 1984:88). The most popular TV shows from 1950-1955 were "Leave it to Beaver" and "The Ed Sullivan Show." Talk shows were introduced in 1962. (Julian 1984). Given the wide audience, TV programming was censored and programs like "Roots" (1963) and the news documentation of the JFK assassination shocked the nation (Kissler 1997). However, as audiences diversified, TV programming expanded to meet a wider variety of audiences in the 1990s (Schneider 2005; Loving 2009). Schneider points out that the growth of pornography was chiefly responsible for the addition of adult-only content in TV programming (2005).

Professor Angela Kita developed this writing activity to help her students better understand the purpose and organization of a methods section. In the activity, students practice writing their own methods section and they discuss their work with peers. Kita also provides general tips about scientific writing along with examples.

Professor Angela Kita
Biomolecular Chemistry

METHODS WRITING PRACTICE ACTIVITY IN BIOMOLECULAR CHEMISTRY 504

Based on lab 1: Pipetting & Spectrophotometry

The methods can be a difficult section to write. It needs to be a clear and precise description of how the experiment was done, including: materials used, a description of the experiment, and how results were analyzed. And yet, you have to strike a balance between enough information that the reader knows what you did, but not so much information that you are re-writing the protocol. This activity will be an opportunity to practice writing a methods section.

Organization: Methods sections are usually best when each major step is separated into subheadings (i.e. for each assay or type of analysis). What subheadings might you use for "Determining Concentration using Absorbance" from Lab 1? *Write your ideas here:*

Identifying Relevant Information: Another key aspect of the methods section is highlighting the most important information that will make sense to someone with a scientific background (that can go look up a more detailed protocol as needed). *Using the space provided below, outline the main steps of "Determining Concentration using Absorbance" as bullet points.*

Discuss your subheadings and bullet points with 2 other students and highlight the most relevant pieces of information.

Draft: In 2-3 sentences, write out the methods for Lab 1. (Use the back of the page)

Exchange with partner and provide feedback:

	(circle one)			**Specific Comments**
Level of detail	Insufficient detail	About right, relevant information included	Too much detail	
Sentence structure	Incomplete sentences	About right, clear & easy to follow	Run on sentences	
Other comments:				

General Tips:

- Avoid using volumes as much as possible. For example, report dilutions by referring to the dilution factor: "The sample was diluted 1→10." Versus "2 mL of sample was mixed with 18 mL of filtered water."
- Always write in the third person, passive, past tense. Example "The sample was incubated on ice for 30 minutes." Not "I put the sample on ice for 30 minutes."

Rebecca Lorimer and Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek provide a list of strategies and activities that instructors can use to teach their students what revision is and how to incorporate it as an essential step in their writing process.

Rebecca Lorimer and Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek
Writing Across the Curriculum

TEACHING REVISION

Revision, revision, revision: the term is nearly a mantra in Comm-B and Writing-Intensive (WI) courses. Indeed, the university criteria for Comm-B and Writing-Intensive courses *mandate* that instructors build the revision process into their courses—and for good reason. Research has consistently shown that the best, most experienced writers regularly revise their writing in substantive ways.

Why spend time teaching students how to revise their writing?
Benefits for students:

- Students' writing, as well as their understanding of content, improves from sustained thinking over time.
- Students can experiment and take chances with low-stakes writing early on in a revision process and engage more comfortably in high-stakes writing when a paper is due.
- Students practice their academic and professional planning skills.

Benefits for you:

- You can evaluate how well students understand course concepts by watching how they teach each other during revision activities.
- You might better leverage your time by receiving quality work that actually takes less time to evaluate.

Why do students resist revision?
Even when they recognize these benefits, one of the most common laments we hear from Comm-B and WI instructors is that they can't get their students to undertake substantial revisions from one draft to the next. It is surely true that some students choose not to revise because it is *demanding work*. But there may be other reasons as well.

Some students may not meet our expectations for revision because they *understand the term very differently* than we do. When Nancy Sommers, a researcher at Harvard, asked student writers and professional authors what "revision" meant to them, they gave her wildly divergent answers:

"…just using better words and eliminating words that are not needed. I go over and change words around."
"…cleaning up the paper and crossing out. It is looking at something and saying, no that has to go, or no, that is not right."
"…on one level, finding the argument, and on another level, language changes to make the argument more effective."
"…a matter of looking at the kernel of what I have written, the content, and then thinking about it, responding to it, making decisions, and actually restructuring it."

Whereas the students described revision as a process of making adjustments at a more superficial level ("just using better words" and "cleaning up"), the professional authors described revision as a process of making fundamental changes to a paper ("finding the argument" and "actually restructuring"). Instructors of Comm-B and WI courses, no doubt, have the latter definitions in mind. But when students and instructors understand the term revision so differently, it is no surprise that many students don't undertake the kinds of revisions instructors have in mind.

Students may be willing to revise and may comprehend the kinds of revision that their instructors have in mind, but still make only superficial corrections to their drafts because they *lack specific strategies* to help them successfully undertake more fundamental revisions. With these possible explanations in mind, we offer the following suggestions—based on our own experiences and our conversations with instructors across the campus—for encouraging and teaching students to revise.

Make clear what you mean by "revision."

- Be explicit about your definition of revision. Write your definition in your syllabus and discuss it in class with students. One definition we particularly like: "True revision involves reseeing, rethinking, and reshaping the piece, resolving a tension between what we intended to say and what the discourse actually says" (Erika Lindemann, *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers*).
- Model for students what you have in mind by sharing a before-and-after example of a revised paper; some instructors give examples from previous students, others share examples of revisions undertaken by famous authors.
- Consider sharing a piece of your own drafts and revised writing.

Address the common belief that good writing comes naturally and does not need to be revised.

- Have your class read Donald Murray's short piece, "The Art of Revision," or an excerpt from Anne Lamott's book *Bird by Bird*, which discusses the author's struggles with revision and the value of extremely rough drafts.

Focus your comments on the revisions that will be most beneficial.
Faced with lots of commentary on a draft, some students miss the big points or are simply too overwhelmed to engage in revision at all.

- In your conferences or in written comments, set priorities. Although a paper could be improved in many ways, you might set one or two "main goals" for revision.
- Try to make sure your marginal comments reflect those priorities. If 70% of the marks students see on a page are grammar-related and they find only one comment in the endnote advising them to restructure the organization, they may well assume that grammatical revisions are the most pressing revisions.

Avoid abstract terms when giving feedback.
Just as you need to establish with your students a common understanding of the term "revision," you will need to establish common understandings of other terms you use to define what needs to be revised—including "flow," "analysis," and "thesis."

- Plan activities in class that allow students to apply your criteria. Pass out your criteria or grading rubric before the assignment is due and ask students to use the criteria to evaluate a sample essay.
- Have students spend time generating their own criteria for the assignment. Ask them to finish the sentence starter "I will succeed in this assignment by writing a paper that is…" It's surprising how close to your own criteria students often come.

Provide your students with specific strategies and models.
You can also help students begin to revise by being concrete about how to revise and showing them step-by-step what revision looks like.

- Model a topic sentence, explain exactly what is "awkward" about a sentence, or write out a more effective transition and explain what makes it so. Often such explanations are more easily and efficiently conveyed in one-on-one conferences.
- Practice reverse outlining in class—a strategy particularly useful for organizational revision. (A detailed explanation of reverse outlining can be found in this sourcebook.) Outline a draft for students first and then have them work on another classmate's draft.
- Lead a whole-class workshop of a model paper. Pass out a sample that is very successful, needs revision, or exhibits a particular quality you want to discuss. Give students time to write marginal or endnotes and then discuss it as a class.

Motivate students to revise.

- Acknowledge how difficult—even discouraging—the revision process can be.
- When commenting on drafts, point out what is good in students' work, so that students can learn not only from other people's model work, but also from what they themselves have already successfully done. For example, if a student regularly neglects to analyze his evidence, praise the one instance where he does and point out how it strengthens the paper. Then urge the student to revise other sections of the paper based on that positive example.
- Consider adopting and making explicit the following policy: although revision will not automatically improve a grade, students who undertake a major revision (even an unsuccessful one) will not be penalized. Some instructors grade drafts and the improvements on those drafts as a way to motivate students.
- Many students are also motivated to revise when they sense a genuine interest on the part of the instructor: interest in their ideas, arguments, research—and in their progress as writers.

Make sure there is adequate time for the hard work of revision.

- Build the revision process into your syllabus; for examples of how to pace drafts and revision throughout the semester see the syllabi in the "Sequencing Assignments" section of this book.
- Consider using a final portfolio to grade students. (See examples in this sourcebook.)

Encourage / require students to get feedback on drafts from multiple sources. Sometimes hearing similar responses from various sources can confirm for students the need to revise. Other times, one respondent can explain a point of confusion in a way that suddenly makes sense. There are many possible sources of feedback: student-teacher conferences, peer groups, the Writing Center, a Writing Fellow, and even student-writers themselves. You may, however, want to talk with your students about what to do if they get contradictory advice about revising.

Instructor Molly Peeney gives step-by-step instructions for leading in-class discussions of student writing. She has used the following format for Literature in Translation 204.

Molly Peeney
Slavic Languages and Literature

IN-CLASS DISCUSSIONS OF STUDENT WRITING: MAXIMIZING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR WRITING LESSONS AND MINIMIZING THE CLASS TIME YOU USE FOR THEM

Using student writing samples as the basis of your in-class discussions about writing is an effective method to teach writing and it saves you time. Why?

- You can talk concretely about specific writing problems in class.
- You can deal precisely with course content.
- You don't have to write the same thing over and over again when you're responding to papers.
- Full-class discussions of writing allow students to cultivate the analytical skills they need to write successful papers.

Part I: Preparation

Facilitating a short, effective writing lesson requires planning and forethought. To prepare for an in-class writing lesson based on student writing samples, you should:

- Make it known to your students on the first day and in your syllabus that their writing will be considered public domain for the course. In other words, warn them that you will be using selections of their writing in class.
- Assign a short, well-defined writing assignment early in the semester that students will have the opportunity to revise. (See this sourcebook for more ideas about designing and sequencing writing assignments.)
- Schedule the assignment so that you will meet with all of your sections between the initial submission and the first revision of the assignment, making sure that students will have ample time for additional revision after the in-class lesson.

Part II: Choosing samples of student writing

Once you receive the first submissions of your students' papers, sort through them and select samples before you mark the pages, then photocopy and/or prepare samples to share in class. When you select your samples, you should:

- Try to select student writing samples that target a specific writing issue that will be applicable throughout the semester. Some examples of writing issues you might address are thesis statements; paragraph construction; incorporating quotations into writing vs. paraphrasing; the difference between summarizing and analyzing; etc.
- Select samples of varying quality.
- As you select samples, think about how much time you have in class to discuss them. I usually have time for only one paragraph from each of about three samples. If you want the class to critique a lengthier section of a paper, you might ask students to read the sections for homework.
- Compile your thoughts, comments, and suggestions for each of the samples.
- Read through your compiled thoughts for all of the selections and identify three main points you'd like to emphasize that are common to all of the samples. As you generate discussion about the samples, make sure you return to these three main points.
- An additional option to consider: You might prepare a writing sample of your own and have students evaluate it in class as well. Not only does sharing your own writing show empathy for students, but it also demonstrates the important lesson that writing can always be improved, because your students will have suggestions for you! When I lead this activity, I initially withhold the fact that the writing is mine, so that students won't feel too intimidated to respond to it.

Part III: Leading a discussion about the writing

- Remind your students that the authors of these samples could be in the room and encourage them to give candid yet sensitive feedback. Talking about specific writing samples in class allows you to model how to give good feedback and gives students the opportunity to practice these skills, which will make future full-class discussions run more smoothly and will prepare the students for peer review in small groups.
- Explain to students that the first thing you will do together is rank the samples. Read through each of the samples together, asking a different student to read each sample aloud.

- Rank the samples from best to worst by a show of hands. Usually, there's a consensus. If there's not, however, that's instructive too! A consensus helps to communicate to students that your evaluation of their writing is not totally subjective, while disagreement can open up productive discussions about how certain aspects of academic writing affect different audiences.
- Go back and spend time on each individual sample. Draw out your prepared points about each and validate your students' comments. It's tricky to keep discussion on task, but keep in mind that this is a directed, not exploratory, discussion. Feel free to entertain (briefly!) valuable comments from students that are not on your list, but don't let them derail you! You can re-direct the discussion by saying things like, "That's an insightful comment, but I'm not going to delve into that further because I'm trying to focus on much more basic aspects of writing," or "That point is highly debatable/abstract/contentious. Let's stick to the more established/concrete/accepted conventions of academic writing right now."
- Once you've discussed all of the samples, be sure to emphasize the strengths of each sample, as well as reinforce your main points.
- A postscript about public criticism: To have your piece of writing ranked the lowest is instructive, but is never fun. So make sure that the lowest ranked sample has some genuine strengths that you can point out in class. I have found, however, that students are rarely insulted by a low ranking in the context of this exercise. The combined effort of comparing samples and focusing on a small amount of text gives more specificity to the general comments students have been getting for years. In this discussion, they get helpful feedback and suggestions for revision, rather than just criticism.

Part IV: Building on this exercise

By doing such an exercise, you establish a format for discussing writing that you can use over and over again for different targeted topics. Moreover, you've established a shared vocabulary with your class about writing concerns that can help them (and you!) talk productively about writing in conferences, peer review, and large group discussions.

In the following email sent to all students in a large course, Dr. Ann Burgess—former director of the Biocore program—encourages Biocore students to keep working on their revisions, even when they feel overwhelmed by criticism.

Dr. Ann Burgess
Biocore

OFFERING STUDENTS ENCOURAGEMENT AS THEY REVISE

Biocore Students:

I wanted to offer you some moral support as you tackle revising your Enzyme Catalysis papers.

We want you to succeed.
Read over the comments from your TA and think about the issues that he/she brought up in the discussion sections this week. If you are confused about any of this come and see us—Marcie, me, or your TA. We really want to help you. We also encourage you to contact the Writing Center, 6171 White Hall (263-1992). We decided to reduce the weight of this first paper to 1/2. The revised version will be weighted 2.

Your grades are based on the big picture much, much more than on the details.
Here is what I mean by big picture: in grading the papers, the TAs ask:

• Can I understand what the experiment was designed to test and how she went about it?
• Are the appropriate data here and expressed in a way that I can immediately get the picture?
• Do the conclusions make sense based on the data? (Although it is fine to say what YOU expected to find, you must base your conclusions on what you actually observed. Also, beware of over-interpreting differences that may simply be experimental variation.)

TAs also commented on details, but these affected your grade very little. Nevertheless, it is important to fix these in the rewrites. Some examples of details: not showing actual data points in your figure, reporting your data in too many significant digits, labeling your figure Graph I instead of Figure 1, incorrect citation of the lab manual.

We hold you to high standards and want to help you reach them.
Here's what the grades mean:

A: Truly excellent paper. All sections address their relevant issues in a clear and concise form that communicates an impressive understanding of the topic at hand. Paper is a pleasure to read.

AB: Very good paper that is missing a few of the characteristics of truly excellent papers. Most sections communicate a high degree of understanding, somewhat more variable than A.

B: Good paper, complete and adequate, reasonably thorough though not impressive; demonstrates understanding.

BC: Not adequate or has parts that are not adequate, demonstrates some understanding.

C: Many problems, e.g., missing key components, misunderstanding the experiment or data, drawing inappropriate conclusions from the data.

D: Major problems.

Please keep working at this.
I know that it is very disappointing to put a great deal of time and effort into a paper and then get feedback that it needs work. Writing is a process—you learn to write well by writing and rewriting, not by hearing me talk about it. It truly will pay off in the long run. The feedback we get from Biocore students years later is that one of the most valuable things they learned in Biocore was clear thinking and writing.

I welcome your feedback on ways that we can help you (and future classes) improve your writing.

Best wishes,
Ann Burgess

Professor David Zimmerman teaches students how to improve their organization on a paragraph level using four different revision strategies.

Professor David Zimmerman
English

REVISING PARAGRAPHS

Topic sentences are the most important sentences of your essay. They provide the scaffolding or frame for your argument. The function of a body paragraph in an analytical essay is to develop a single idea or claim that advances the essay's argument. This idea or claim should anchor the paragraph's topic sentence. The topic sentence should be the first (or occasionally, second) sentence of the paragraph. It gives the reader a preview and summary of the paragraph. It clearly guides the reader from the previous paragraph's discussion to this new one. It often signals where the reader is within the overall argument.

1. Make a list of your topic sentences.

Read in a row, the topic sentences should present a clear picture of your argument and how it develops. Use the author's name to ensure that you keep our focus on what the *author* (as opposed to a character) is doing.

A list of topic sentences from an essay:

- Dreiser overtly invokes the formulas of biography and biographical fiction in order to mark how he moves beyond them.
- Dreiser shows how conventional biography and fiction, because of the artificiality of their closure, turn their protagonists' lives into moral fables, narrative molds too rigid, formally and ethically, to contain "life as it is, the facts as they exist" (121).
- The ending of *The Financier* illustrates this. Dreiser abandons the obligation felt by most fiction writers to construct an ending that frames the protagonist's life as a moral drama. Instead, Dreiser . . .
- *The Financier* rejects the formal—that is, moral—expectations not only of biographical fiction but also of biography.
- Dreiser calls attention to the limitations of conventional biographical and fictional accounting not only in the way he ends (or fails to end) the novel but also in the way he forestalls this ending by encumbering the narrative with "the sheer mass of detail" (65) that reviewers found exasperatingly redundant and wearisome.
- Dreiser thus enables us to see the limits of conventional financial, legal, and ethical accountability.

Another list of topic sentences from a different essay:

- Through the narrator's constant attention to Ligeia's eyes—which ignite and continually fuel his imagination—Poe establishes the image of the inherently beautiful, mysterious, and powerful eyes not only as an apparent encapsulation of feminine beauty but also as a source of narrative energy that impels the narrator to press forward with his fevered account. In order to discover the source of her beauty, the narrator begins with . . .
- Poe uses the narrator's detailed and descriptive obsession with Ligeia's eyes—which shifts the reader's focus away from the physical aspects of her eyes and towards the internal thinking of the "I" of the narrator—in order to reveal the motivations of the male ego.
- In the moments when the narrator openly submits to Ligeia's authority and superiority over him, Poe demonstrates man at one extreme side of his internal struggle in his tendency and willingness to emasculate himself.
- Poe further emphasizes the tumultuous and bitter struggle of man's desire by displaying the narrator's response to his own passiveness, which materializes as an alternative need to control a docile and permissive female.
- Poe complicates the narrator's pure testaments towards absolute domination or submission when the narrator experiences the two separate feelings at the same time.
- Through the resurrection of Ligeia at the end of the story, Poe indicates the triumph of feminine beauty over the masculine ego, as the narrator submits his ambition and imagination to the intrinsic power of Ligeia's eyes.

2. Outline each paragraph: make every sentence count.

Every sentence in a paragraph has a function. Each sentence advances the idea or aim of the previous sentence in a specific way: it *extends, clarifies, nuances, exemplifies, specifies, or qualifies* it. For each paragraph, I recommend outlining the points you want to make and the textual moments you want to discuss. This allows you to avoid needlessly repeating yourself. It also allows you to see which points require the most discussion and clarification, and which points are subordinate to other points.

3. Use transition phrases to signal *how* one sentence follows from or develops the point of the one before it.

Use transition phrases to convey *addition* (e.g., “moreover”), *comparison* (e.g., “similarly”), *concession* (e.g., “of course”), *contrast* (e.g., “at the same time”), *emphasis* (e.g., “indeed”), *example or illustration* (e.g., “for instance”), *summary* (e.g., “in short”), and *time sequence* (e.g., “afterwards”). For a full list of transition phrases and some excellent counsel about how to produce coherent, flowing paragraphs, go to grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/transitions.htm.

4. Cap off your paragraphs: make sure we see the payoff or point of each paragraph.

At the end of each body paragraph, if it’s not already obvious, clarify how the point you’ve just discussed advances your argument (about what the author is saying or showing about a particular problem, question, or topic).

Example:

> By allowing Wieland to believe he has knowledge of God’s will, Brocken Brown <u>further</u> suggests that Wieland can never know the future because he cannot account for forces outside of his limited control, including his own predisposition to madness and Carwin’s trickery. <u>Accordingly</u>, Brocken Brown uses Wieland’s example to illustrate how yielding one’s future to divine authority is reckless and stems from dissatisfaction with the present state of things.

Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek describes a technique for helping students improve the organization of their papers by encouraging them to think about the paper more as readers and less as writers.

Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek
English

USING A REVERSE OUTLINE TO REVISE

What is a reverse outline?
If a regular outline is something you write *before* you draft out your paper, a reverse outline is something you do after you write a draft.

Why should I reverse outline?
The reverse outline can be an extremely useful tool for helping you see the big picture of your paper, and can be especially useful for papers in need of major reordering of paragraphs or papers filled with paragraphs that have too many ideas in them and therefore don't hold together.

How do I make a reverse outline?
Go through the paper and number each paragraph. Then on a separate sheet of paper, write #1 and the main point (or points) of that first paragraph. Then, on the next line write #2 and the main point(s) of the second paragraph. Go through the entire paper this way. When you have gone through the entire paper, you will have an outline giving you an overview of your entire paper.

Then what?
Now look carefully at your overview, asking yourself the following questions:

- Are the paragraphs properly focused, or are there multiple main ideas competing for control of a single paragraph?
- Now that you've identified the main point of each paragraph, does the topic sentence reflect that point?
- Are some of the ideas in a paragraph extraneous and should they therefore be deleted from the paper? Or do they simply need to be moved to a different part of the paper? (Many times you may find that a random idea tacked onto the end of, say, paragraph five really belongs in paragraph eleven where you fully develop that idea.)
- When you look at the outline as a whole, does the organization of the paper reflect what you promised in your introduction / thesis? If the answer is no, consider whether you need to revise the thesis or revise the organization of the paper.

If you're having trouble making or using a reverse outline, please come talk with me. I am more than happy to help!

In the following excerpt from the Biocore program's Writing Manual, Dr. Michelle Harris and Dr. Janet Batzli offer explicit instruction to students, along with detailed models.

Dr. Michelle Harris
Dr. Janet Batzli
Biocore

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION FOR A SCIENTIFIC PAPER

This section provides guidelines on how to construct a solid introduction to a scientific paper including **background** information, **study question**, **biological rationale, hypothesis**, and general **approach**. If the Introduction is done well, there should be no question in the reader's mind why and on what basis you have posed a specific hypothesis.

Broad Question: based on an **initial observation** (e.g., "I see a lot of guppies close to the shore. Do guppies like living in shallow water?"). This observation of the natural world may inspire you to investigate background literature or your observation could be based on previous research by others or your own pilot study. Broad questions are not always included in your written text, but are essential for establishing the direction of your research.

Background Information: key issues, concepts, terminology, and definitions needed to understand the biological rationale for the experiment. It often includes a summary of findings from previous, relevant studies. Remember to cite references, be concise, and only include relevant information given your audience and your experimental design. Concisely summarized background information leads to the identification of specific scientific knowledge gaps that still exist. (e.g., "No studies to date have examined whether guppies do indeed spend more time in shallow water.")

Testable Question: these questions are much more focused than the initial broad question, are specific to the knowledge gap identified, and can be addressed with data. (e.g., "Do guppies spend different amounts of time in water <1 meter deep as compared to their time in water that is >1 meter deep?")

Biological Rationale: describes the purpose of your experiment distilling what is known and what is not known that defines the knowledge gap that you are addressing. The "BR" provides the logic for your hypothesis and experimental approach, describing the biological mechanism and assumptions that explain **why your hypothesis should be true.**

The biological rationale is based on your interpretation of the scientific literature, your personal observations, and the underlying assumptions you are making about how you think the system works. If you have written your biological rationale, your reader should see your hypothesis in your introduction section and say to themselves, "Of course, this hypothesis seems very logical based on the rationale presented."

- A thorough rationale defines your ***assumptions*** about the system that have not been revealed in scientific literature or from previous systematic observation. These assumptions drive the direction of your specific hypothesis or general predictions.
- **Defining the rationale** is probably the most critical task for a writer, as it tells your reader why your research is biologically meaningful. It may help to think about the *rationale* as an answer to the questions—how is this investigation related to what we know, what assumptions am I making about what we don't yet know, AND how will this experiment add to our knowledge? *There may or may not be broader implications for your study; be careful not to overstate these (see note on social justifications below).
- Expect to spend time and mental effort on this. You may have to do considerable digging into the scientific literature to define how your experiment fits into what is already known and why it is relevant to pursue.
- Be open to the possibility that as you work with and think about your data, you may develop a deeper, more accurate understanding of the experimental system. You may find the original rationale needs to be revised to reflect your new, more sophisticated understanding.
- As you progress through Biocore and upper level biology courses, **your rationale should become more focused and matched with the level of study** i.e*.,* cellular, biochemical, or physiological mechanisms that underlie the rationale. Achieving this type of understanding takes effort, but it will lead to better communication of your science.

*****Special note on avoiding social justifications:** You should **not** overemphasize the relevance of your experiment and the possible connections to large-scale processes. **Be realistic and logical**—do not overgeneralize or state grand implications that are not sensible given the structure of your experimental system. Not all science is easily applied to improving the human condition. Performing an investigation just for the sake of adding to our scientific knowledge ("pure or basic science") is just as important as applied science. In fact, basic science often provides the foundation for applied studies.

Hypothesis / Predictions: specific prediction(s) that you will test during your experiment. **For manipulative experiments, the hypothesis** should include the **independent variable** (what you manipulate), the **dependent variable(s)** (what you measure), the **organism or system**, the **direction** of your results, and **comparison** to be made.

Examples:

Hypothesis that Needs Work (manipulative experiment)	**Better Hypothesis (manipulative experiment)**
We hypothesized that *Daphnia magna* reared in warm water will have a greater sexual mating response. (The dependent variable "sexual response" has not been defined enough to be able to make this hypothesis testable or falsifiable. In addition, no comparison has been specified—greater sexual mating response as compared to what?)	We hypothesized that *Daphnia magna* (***STUDY ORGANISM***) reared in warm water temperatures ranging from 25-28 °C (**IND. VAR.**) would produce greater (**direction**) numbers of male offspring and females carrying haploid egg sacs (**DEPEND. VAR.**) than *D. magna* reared in cooler water temperatures of 18-22°C.

If you are doing a **systematic observation**, your hypothesis presents a **variable** or set of variables that you predict are important for helping you characterize the system as a whole, or predict differences between components/areas of the system that help you explain how the system functions or changes over time.

Hypothesis that Needs Work (systematic observation)	**Better Hypothesis (systematic observation)**
We hypothesize that the frequency and extent of algal blooms in Lake Mendota over the last 10 years causes fish kills and imposes a human health risk. (The variables "frequency and extent of algal blooms," "fish kills" and "human health risk" have not been defined enough to be able to make this hypothesis testable or falsifiable. How do you measure algal blooms? Although implied, hypothesis should express predicted direction of expected results [e.g., higher frequency associated with greater kills]. Note that cause and effect cannot be implied without a controlled, manipulative experiment.)	We hypothesize that increasing (**DIRECTION**) cell densities of algae (**VAR.**) in Lake Mendota over the last 10 years is correlated with 1. increased numbers of dead fish (**VAR.**) washed up on Madison beaches and 2. increased numbers of reported hospital/clinical visits (**VAR**.) following full-body exposure to lake water.

<u>Experimental Approach</u>: *Briefly* gives the reader a general sense of the experiment, the type of data it will yield, and the kind of conclusions you expect to obtain from the data. Do not confuse the **experimental approach** with the **experimental protocol**. The experimental protocol consists of the detailed step-by-step procedures and techniques used during the experiment that are to be reported in the Methods and Materials section.

Some Final Tips on Writing an Introduction

- **As you progress through the Biocore sequence,** for instance, from organismal level of Biocore 301/302 to the cellular level in Biocore 303/304, we expect the contents of your "Introduction" paragraphs to reflect the level of your coursework and previous writing experience. For example, in Biocore 304 (Cell Biology Lab) biological rationale should draw upon assumptions we are making about cellular and biochemical processes.
- **Be Concise yet Specific:** Remember to be concise and only include relevant information given your audience and your experimental design. As you write, keep asking, "Is this necessary information or is this irrelevant detail?" For example, if you are writing a paper claiming that a certain compound is a competitive inhibitor to the enzyme alkaline phosphatase and acts by binding to the active site, you need to explain (briefly) Michaelis-Menton kinetics and the meaning and significance of Km and Vmax. This explanation is not necessary if you are reporting the dependence of enzyme activity on pH because you do not need to measure Km and Vmax to get an estimate of enzyme activity.
- **Another example:** if you are writing a paper reporting an increase in *Daphnia magna* heart rate upon exposure to caffeine you need not describe the reproductive cycle of *D. magna* unless it is germane to your results and discussion. Be specific and concrete, especially when making introductory or summary statements.

Where Do You Discuss Pilot Studies?

Many times it is important to do pilot studies to help you get familiar with your experimental system or to improve your experimental design. **If your pilot study influences your biological rationale or hypothesis, you need to describe it in your Introduction.** If your pilot study simply informs the logistics or techniques, but does not influence your rationale, then the description of your pilot study belongs in the Materials and Methods section.

Below is the format for a sample paper that Introductory Biology 151/152 students are expected to follow. The left-hand column contains the paper, while the right-hand column explains to students how this paper follows the conventions of writing in the sciences.

Biology 151/152

SAMPLE PAPER IN SCIENTIFIC FORMAT

The sample paper below has been compressed into the left-hand column on the pages below. In the right-hand column we have included notes explaining how and why the paper is written as it is.

Color Preferences for Nesting Material in the Zebra Finch (*Poephila guttata*)	The title should describe the study. In other words, the title should give the reader a good idea of the purpose of the experiment. Both the common and scientific names of the research organism must be included in the title.
INTRODUCTION	
The zebra finch (*Poephila guttata*) is a sexually dimorphic, social estrildid native to the grasslands of Australia. They are opportunistic, year-round breeders which nest in colonies of variable size. Zebra finches form permanent pair bonds and both sexes share the responsibilities of nest building, incubation and rearing of young (Walter, 1973). Morris (1954), however, reported that although both sexes pick up and nibble on fragments of material, males collect most of the nesting material.	The scientific name of the research organism must be stated the first time the organism is mentioned in any of the sections. Thereafter, within each section, either the common name or the abbreviated scientific name can be used.
Studies on the effects of colored plastic leg bands on pair formation show that male zebra finches spend more time sitting next to females wearing black or pink leg bands than females wearing light blue leg bands. The same studies indicate that females spend more time sitting next to males wearing red leg bands than males wearing light green bands. In both male and female, orange leg bands (which are similar to natural leg color) proved to be of intermediate preference (Burley, 1981 and 1982).	The first paragraphs of the introduction provide background information from preliminary or other published studies. This is used to develop the hypothesis or purpose of the experiment and to provide the rationale or reason for conducting the experiment.
The purpose of this study was to test whether or not this preference for certain colors of leg bands generalizes to preference for certain colors of nesting material. It was hypothesized that zebra finches would collect more red or black material than light green, with collection of orange being intermediate.	This paragraph specifically states the purpose of the experiment. It also states the hypothesis the author developed based on background reading and observations.
METHODS	
The zebra finches used in this study were in three colonies in the lab of Dr. J.R. Baylis at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Each colony contained between thirty and forty individual birds of both sexes, a variety of ages and several plumage types. All animals wore colored leg bands for individual identification and all had been exposed to grass, green embroidery floss and white dog fur as nesting material previous to this study. The colonies were housed in separate rooms, each approximately 17m3 and each contained eight artificial nest boxes. All behavioral observations were made from outside the colony rooms through one-way mirrors.	The methods begin by indicating where the research organisms were obtained. Specific examples about the organisms are included, e.g. number of organisms, sexes, ages, and morphology. Previous exposure to colored nest material is described. How organisms were housed, including specific dimensions of cages, etc. and the physical conditions of light and temperature, is also included.

Red, black, orange and light green DMC four-ply cotton embroidery floss was cut into 2.5 cm pieces. During each trial, twenty-five pieces of each color were separated and spread out over the floor of the colony. After the birds had been exposed to the material for a total of two hours, any remaining strands of floss on the floor were collected. The number of strands of each color was counted. It was assumed all other strands (not on the floor) had been used in nest construction. Data from the three colonies were pooled and an X^2 goodness-of-fit test was used to determine whether the number of strands of each color used in nest construction different from an expected ratio of 1:1:1:1 (which would indicate no preference).	The types of test materials used are described in detail, as are the methods. Description of methods includes assumptions made and type of analysis to be performed on the data.

RESULTS	
More green material was removed by the finches than red, more red than black and more black than orange. The ratio between material of different colors used in nest construction differed significantly from the expected 1:1:1:1 (X^2=63.44, df=3, p<.005). When colors were compared in pairs, the difference between values for green and red were not significantly different (X^2=117, df=1, p>.5). However, the values for black and orange were significantly different (X^2=36.38, df=1, p<.005).	The author interprets the data for the reader in text form. The author does not expect the reader to interpret the results from a table of data, but instead provides his/her interpretation for the reader.
DISCUSSION	The discussion provides an explanation of what the results mean relative to the original purpose and/or hypothesis stated in the introduction.
The results from these experiments suggest that zebra finches do in fact have color preferences with regard to nesting material. Contrary to the predictions made by generalizing Burley's studies (1981, 1982), however, the zebra finches used in this study preferred green, red or black nesting material to orange. These results are similar to those of Collias and Collias (1981) who showed that weaver birds preferred green nesting material.	Results are compared to those from other studies. Plausible reasons/hypotheses are proposed to explain the results.
It is possible that zebra finches prefer green material to red, black and orange because green is more similar to the color of the grasses commonly used as nesting material in their natural environment. This interpretation, however, does not explain the preference for red and black materials over orange.	Limitations to the proposed hypotheses are also provided.
Alternatively, it is possible that the strong preference shown for green material may be a result of imprinting on the color of the nests they grew up in. It has been shown, for example, that parental plumage color has a strong effect on mate selection in male (but not female) zebra finches (Walter, 1973). All of the birds used in this study have been exposed to grass, green embroidery floss and white dog fur in nests. If as suggested by Morris (1954) males collect most of the nesting material, imprinting could have a strong effect on the numbers of colored strands collected in this study. This hypothesis could be tested by raising zebra finches in nests containing different colors of nesting materials and testing them in adulthood for preference in nest material color. When setting up this experiment, it was noted that zebra finches seem particularly apprehensive about new objects placed in the colony. It is also possible, therefore, that the preference for green nest material was simply due to its familiarity.	Alternative hypotheses are also provided, and evidence from literature is given in support of the alternate hypothesis. Future studies are proposed to help further knowledge in the area.
REFERENCES	

Burley, N. 1981 Sex-ratio manipulation and selection for attractiveness. **Science** 211: 721-722. Burley, N. 1982 Influence of colour-banding on the nonspecific preference of zebra finches. **Anim. Behav**. 30: 444-445. (Additional references deleted for brevity.)	All references cited in the body of the paper are listed alphabetically by last name of the first author. Only references cited in the body of the paper are listed here. See the Introductory Biology 151-152 manual for complete information on how to reference supporting literature both in the body of the paper and in the reference list.
RESULTS	
More green material was removed by the finches than red, more red than black and more black than orange. The ratio between material of different colors used in nest construction differed significantly from the expected 1:1:1:1 (X^2=63.44, df=3, p<.005). When colors were compared in pairs, the difference between values for green and red were not significantly different (X^2=117, df=1, p>.5). However, the values for black and orange were significantly different (X^2=36.38, df=1, p<.005).	The author interprets the data for the reader in text form. The author does not expect the reader to interpret the results from a table of data, but instead provides his/her interpretation for the reader.
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Alice Robison and Bonnie Smith discuss the wide variety of options available to help instructors create writing and classroom tasks that help students avoid plagiarism.

Alice J. Robison
Bonnie K. Smith
Writing Across the Curriculum

DESIGNING ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS TO DISCOURAGE PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a serious topic raised frequently when we talk about responding to student writing, and it makes sense that we should want to talk about plagiarism in the context of evaluating and responding to student writing because it is at that moment—after the fact—that we discover that plagiarism or cheating has occurred. The University has provided instructors with a series of strategies for dealing with plagiarism. Thankfully, serious plagiarizers are the exception to the rule in most of our classrooms.

But despite warnings and the threat of punishment, plagiarism does occur, and with increasing frequency. The Council of Writing Program Administrators notes that "with the advent of the Internet and easy access to almost limitless written material on every conceivable topic, suspicion of student plagiarism has begun to affect teachers at all levels, at times diverting them from the work of developing students' writing, reading, and critical thinking abilities." [1] So, what can writing instructors do to stop plagiarism before it happens? What strategies are available to instructors as they seek to prevent students from committing the act in the first place? Teaching our students about proper use of sources and citation methods is an important part of discouraging plagiarism, and defining, discussing, and teaching proper use of sources and citation methods is a useful tactic. Experienced instructors concur that it is important to include information on plagiarism in their syllabi, perhaps confirming class discussions with "academic honesty contracts" or institutional "honor codes."

In addition to these explicit efforts to discourage plagiarism, instructors can also think carefully about course and assignment design. As Sally Cole and Elizabeth Kiss (2000) point out in their article, "What Can We Do About Student Cheating," "Students are most likely to cheat when they think their assignments are pointless, and least likely to cheat when they admire and respect their teachers and are excited about what they are learning."

Options for Preventing Plagiarism
Although we may not realize it, the basic requirements for Comm-B and Writing-Intensive courses at UW include many pedagogically sound tactics for teaching writing—activities that can help discourage plagiarism. These guidelines ask instructors to:

- Develop discipline-specific writing activities that encourage students to learn and understand the discourse of a field of study
- Emphasize revision as a routine process for writing
- Conduct regular, one-on-one, in-depth conferences with students about their writing
- Devote class time to preparing students to complete writing assignments
- Implement regular, informal, ungraded writing tasks
- Keep class sizes small
- Ask students to provide regular feedback on their experiences with the course.

Additionally, here are some suggestions for activities that may help you and your students avoid problems, all of which are most effective at the beginning of a course:

- Share the University's definition of misconduct with your students.
- Share examples of misconduct. For example, show your students an acceptable paraphrase juxtaposed with an unacceptable paraphrase.
- Talk regularly with all of your students about their papers in progress and their evolving ideas for their papers. Regular dialogue with your students not only helps students improve their thinking and writing but also discourages plagiarism.
- Remind your students about documenting sources. And ask them what they already know about documentation, so you can build from their existing experience.
- Decide what violating the rules means in your class. If your course or department does not already bind your course to a specific academic honesty policy, make a policy, communicate that policy to your students, and stick to it.
- Many instructors articulate their own or their department's academic honesty policies in contract form and have their students sign the contracts at the beginning of the semester. Such a contract serves multiple purposes: it teaches students about their responsibilities as writers, alerts students that you care about academic honesty, discourages students from plagiarizing, and may help you if you have to deal with a plagiarism case.

[1] "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices."
The following is an example of an academic honesty contract used in my English 100 course.

Academic Honesty Contract

One of the fundamental principles of this university is that “academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin system” (Wisconsin Administrative Code 14.01). While what constitutes in-class cheating (copying the work of others, unauthorized use of prepared notes, etc.) is often obvious to students, plagiarism merits further elaboration.

Plagiarism is…

- Using someone else’s words or ideas without proper documentation.
- Copying some portion of your text from another source without proper acknowledgement of indebtedness.
- Borrowing another person’s specific ideas without documenting their source.
- Having another person correct or revise your work. This differs from getting feedback from a writing group, or from an individual, which you then attempt to implement.
- Turning in a paper written by another person, from an essay “service,” or from a website (including reproductions of such essays or papers).

In addition to the instruction you have received in this course, writing handbooks are excellent sources for learning how to avoid plagiarism. The writing center has an online handbook that can be accessed at www.wisc.edu/writing. Click on “Writer’s Handbook.” And of course, you may always talk with me if you have any questions about plagiarism.

Consequences:

Anyone who plagiarizes in this class will be reported to the Director of Composition and earn a failing grade in the course. Further penalties may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

Signing below indicates:

- I understand what plagiarism is,
- I will ask my instructor if I have questions regarding plagiarism,
- I understand my responsibilities regarding this matter, and
- I agree to abide by the above consequences should I intentionally plagiarize.

________________________ (student) _________ (date)   ___________________________ (instructor) ________ (date)

Designing Assignments to Discourage Plagiarism

Beyond these best practices for teaching writing are several best practices for preventing plagiarism in the writing classroom. In a statement on plagiarism the Council on Writing Program Administrators recommends that instructors improve the design and sequence of assignments, noting that there are things we can do as instructors to design our courses so as not to invite plagiarism:

1. *Tailor assignments carefully to the content of your course*. One of the riskiest things to do is to give generic assignments not tailored to the course. Offering students concrete and specific questions that are situated in the course’s content and learning goals can discourage infinite choice while helping students to understand your expectations. If you provide students with detailed paths of inquiry that are grounded in the subject matter and class activities, you’ll discourage broad, off-topic responses.

2. *Design assignments that require students to explore a subject in depth*. Longer writing assignments that are sequenced (see section on sequencing at the front of this sourcebook)—i.e., “broken up” into smaller, incremental writing tasks—can significantly reduce the opportunity for plagiarism and allow students to think frequently and regularly about the course content and ultimately produce better papers. Activities like student peer review, summarizing sources, and short, sentence- or paragraph-length informal writing assignments as part of a longer, more formal assignment, require students to take ownership over their individual writing processes.

3. *Work with students to help select possible topics early*. Soliciting questions about and criticisms of course material early on in the writing process can help the student begin to articulate a possible writing project. Some ideas include:

    a. Ask students to keep an ongoing, consistently revised list of readings and activities that they’ve enjoyed in the course, bringing the list to conferences for further discussion.
    b. If planning on a term project or paper, ask students to commit early to a broad topic. Then, provide students with due dates for annotated bibliographies, research questions, oral presentations, thesis statements, outlines, beginning paragraphs, etc. Students can (and should) mold their topics as they go, asking and answering questions as they complete the steps of the project.
    c. Students often report that the one-on-one time they spend with instructors is some of the most helpful and valuable learning they experience. Encourage students to bring their ongoing research to your office hours or to the Writing Center for help discussing how to narrow a topic. Time spent in conference

discussing the research a student has already performed can help the student commit to a specific research question or topic that you've developed together.

4. *Develop and sequence assignment schedules for students that allow them time to explore as they work toward defined topics*. Allowing space and time for students to master each challenge as they build toward a larger assignment builds confidence in students' ability to truly learn and understand the material assigned to them. Students are much less likely to cheat if they feel confident in their abilities to master the material on their own. For example, if you regularly assign response papers in your class, think about asking students to first write summaries of the text they've been asked to respond to. Then, encourage them to conduct a peer review of those summaries online or outside of class. They'll quickly find out from each other whether they've understood the text, and you'll spend a lot less time grading summaries instead of critical analyses.

5. *Coach students through each step of the research process*. Let students know that you understand how difficult the writing process can be, and then guide them through it. Many experienced instructors create and distribute handouts on how to find a research question, how to create and sustain a thesis, or how to conduct library research. These guides, written by you, are a wonderful teaching tool. In fact, we've included some excellent examples in this sourcebook. See the section on "Coaching Students to Succeed."

6. *Make the research process, and technology used for it, visible*. The idea here is to make research public. In other words, show students how you found and decided on the readings for the course. Offer up ideas for databases, search terms, websites, and clearinghouses that they can use in their information-gathering activities.

7. Develop evaluation criteria that require students to address the particular questions in your assignment so that a "borrowed" or generic paper—no matter how professional—won't be satisfactory. Sharing your evaluation criteria will communicate to students at the start that you're holding them accountable for answering specific questions.

Biology 151/152 course coordinator Jean Heitz gives an honest assessment of the potential for plagiarism in large lecture courses. She reviews Turnitin as one option for helping students learn what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

Jean Heitz, Course Coordinator
Biology 151/152

USING TURNITIN TO TEACH STUDENTS ABOUT PLAGIARISM

Why do students plagiarize?
A number of recent studies indicate that the vast majority of students admit to having cheated or plagiarized assignments at least once in their high school and college careers. In a recent review, Murdock and Anderman (2010) list a variety of reasons for this. Key among these was the instructors' perceived commitment to their students' learning, the more committed, the less likely students were to cheat. Similarly, plagiarism was less likely when assignments focused on helping students master a skill or concept and when they were challenging but perceived as doable. The authors also discuss a number of traits of the students themselves that can lead to cheating, including procrastination and last minute panic. In addition to these, I would add that many students are not fully aware of what plagiarism is.

What can we do to help our students avoid plagiarism?
As noted above, one of the keys to avoiding plagiarism is to make the reasons for specific assignments relevant and clear to our students. In other words we need to make it clear how developing these skills will be of advantage to them in their future careers. We also need to develop assignments that require original work. In trying to meet these goals, in Introductory Biology 152, our students are given the option of doing mentored research and writing a journal style article describing research or doing a meta-analysis of an open question in the literature. We teach them how to do a meta-analysis, but leave the choice of the questions for the meta-analyses up to the students. For both types of papers students write a proposal, a first draft and a final paper. The proposal and first draft are given formative review comments. Only the final paper is graded. We do not assume that our students know what plagiarism is. We teach them both what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. One excellent source for help with this is the Writing Center's Writers' Handbook section on Avoiding Plagiarism.

However, even with everything we as instructors try to do to connect with our students, make assignments relevant and make it clear what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, some students will still plagiarize. In large classes like ours (1100 plus students per year in 152) the sheer numbers of students involved can lead some to feel disenfranchised and as a result more likely to plagiarize.

How can we detect plagiarism when it occurs?
About 6 years ago, when we suspected that a paper was plagiarized, we googled unusual phrases or sentences looking for the source material. We also compared the students' text to the articles cited in their reference lists. However, doing this effectively for a single paper could take one to several hours. This practice was also considered by some to be "unfair" because only "suspected" papers were checked. Given this, I investigated a number of different plagiarism software systems. Based on their evaluation of a number of papers I had already investigated independently I decided to contract with Turnitin (iParadigms).

What are the advantages of a plagiarism software system like Turnitin?
Turnitin checks our students' papers against information readily available on the internet, information in Proquest, Gale and Infotrac data bases (Hill and Page, 2009). In addition, it checks them against a bank of our previously submitted student papers and those submitted by many other schools, colleges and universities. We can submit 300 or more papers in a day and get reports back on all of them within 24 hours or less. The reports indicate which parts of the paper's text may be similar to that of other sources. As you review the areas of similarity, you can view the student text and the similar source text side by side.

How do we evaluate the Turnitin reports?
We submit each draft (proposal, first draft and final paper) of our student papers to Turnitin and do an evaluation of the similarity reports produced at each of these stages. We review each report that shows anything more than 5% similarity to other sources. These reviews go very quickly. Some reports show a high percent of similarity but may not include direct plagiarism. For example, unless excluded, all citations in the reference list of a student paper may be tagged as areas of similarity. If you are reviewing a second draft of a paper, earlier drafts by the same student author will show up as similar also. Even after you exclude these, you may still see more than 15% similarity with other sources. When you now skim the paper, you will often find that Turnitin is picking up short commonly used phrases throughout the document. These can be ignored. On the other hand, if you find significant blocks of text or a series of closely aligned phrases highlighted from a single source you need to examine these more closely and decide whether or not they constitute plagiarism of wording and/or ideas and whether proper citation has been provided.

If we find these types of similarity during our formative assessment of the proposal or first draft stages of the writing, they become "teachable moments". We meet individually with the students to show them the reports and to help them learn how to avoid plagiarism in future drafts. In other words we use them to help our students understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

What are the disadvantages of a plagiarism software system like Turnitin?
Turnitin checks your students' papers against a vast database of internet sources and of student papers submitted from high schools, colleges and universities around the world. As a result, you will need to work with your Turnitin representative to delimit your student paper searches to a defined area of the world (in my case to Wisconsin and surrounding states). If you don't, you may find many small percentages of similarity (representing short commonly used phrases of text) in each student paper. These may be tagged to 20 or more papers. While you can exclude these when examining papers, it does take time.

It is also unfortunate, but true, that some students will spend as much or more time trying to outsmart the system than they do writing their papers. Fortunately, these tend to be in the minority. However, in today's internet world these students are getting help from a number of specific "cheats" available on the web. You can find some of these by searching for "How to cheat Turnitin". You should make yourself aware of these especially if you find a large percentage of your student papers coming up with 0% similarity. Zero percent similarity means the paper has absolutely no phrases in common with anything in the Turnitin database. The likelihood of more than a few papers falling into this category naturally is low.

One other potential disadvantage has to do with cost. At present there is no campus license for Turnitin or any other plagiarism software system. The cost of a license is based on use and/or number of students. Because of the large number of students in our course (1200/semester) and the number of drafts of each paper we check, we purchased a departmental license for our course, which is relatively expensive.

Does Turnitin catch all plagiarism?
The obvious answer is no. The program won't flag as similar student use of sources not available on the web. In addition, according to recent studies, it may also miss picking up similarity to a variety of professional papers available on the web. However, when tested against similar programs, Turnitin was shown to be equal to or better than the other programs in finding similarity (Hill and Page, 2009; Fiedler and Kaner, 2010).

Is using Turnitin to store your students' papers legal?
A few recent lawsuits questioned the legality of warehousing student papers. One key issue was potential violation of students' copyrights by using them for plagiarism checks by other schools (Foster, 2002; Sharon, 2010). Initial court rulings on these lawsuits have favored Turnitin (Young, 2008). If you are concerned about this, you can avoid the problem. Every time one of your students' papers comes up similar to a paper at another school or university, Turnitin sends you an email asking whether or not you will give permission to release the paper. You can indicate no by not replying to the email.

Should you use Turnitin or a similar anti-plagiarism software system?
To answer this you need to ask yourself the following questions:

- Am I worried about plagiarism among my students? Have I spent more than an hour or two investigating the possibility that some of my students' papers might be plagiarized? If the number of suspect papers is high, you may want to invest in a system like Turnitin.
- Do I want to be more even-handed in how I check papers? If I check one of my student's papers, I check them all.
- Am I sure my students understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it? As I noted previously, formative assessments can be used in conjunction with a program like Turnitin to help flag students who need more help understanding how to avoid plagiarism.
- Do I want to protect my students who don't plagiarize? This is one of the key reasons for doing plagiarism checks.
- Can my course afford it? Who can I contact to find out if a campus license is being considered? To determine the cost for your specific course and number of students, you can contact iParadigms to find your local representative to discuss pricing. Regarding the possibility of a campus license, you can contact Brad Hughes as a representative of the Writing Center to indicate your interest. You can also contact DoIT to note your interest and to ask whether a campus license is under consideration.

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What is the place of grammar in a writing course? Thoughts and advice about how (or whether) to teach grammar.

Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek
Writing Across the Curriculum

PUTTING GRAMMAR IN ITS PLACE . . . BUT MAKING SURE IT HAS A PLACE

Of all the questions facing teachers of Comm-B and Writing-Intensive courses, one of the most puzzling is the question of how—and even whether—to teach grammar. For the most part, Comm-B and Writing-Intensive instructors begin teaching these courses with little background in teaching writing and no experience in talking about the particulars of grammar. Some instructors feel English grammar is the most important thing for students to master before they continue on in the university, and others choose to overlook grammar entirely, focusing instead on students' ideas. They quickly discover, though, that some—sometimes many—of their students' papers contain mistakes in grammar, punctuation, and word choice. Faced with this reality, most instructors find themselves somewhere between those two extremes: striving to find an effective and efficient way to deal with grammatical errors while still maintaining the focus on the central concepts and content of the course.

Putting Error in Historical Perspective

It is certainly true that almost every instructor occasionally encounters those students whose grammar does not meet our basic expectations for standard written English. But those cases are, for the most part, exceptional. Most often we encounter papers with a number of grammatical errors and stylistic lapses which make it difficult to focus on the ideas the student is striving to express in the paper. Instructor laments about such papers (on this campus and others) are common, and are often accompanied by a belief that student writing—especially grammar—is much worse than it used to be. But actually, such complaints have a long history. As early as 1899, Harvard issued a report bemoaning the underpreparedness of its students. And, as John Bean points out, researchers who surveyed student papers from 1917, 1930, and 1986 found that "The error frequency rate in 1917 was 2.11 errors per hundred words; in 1930, it was 2.24 errors per hundred; and in 1986, it was 2.26 errors per hundred words" (Connors and Lunsford, cited in Bean 60). From this history we might conclude that there has been no "golden age" of grammar instruction and student writing has not precipitously declined over the past several years.

Understanding Grammatical Errors

- Nevertheless, as instructors we do indeed have students whose writing—and often grammar in particular—troubles us. How do we explain the frequency of errors that we find in our papers? John Bean, in his book *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011) offers the following explanations. "Students' prose contains fewer mistakes than teachers sometimes perceive." Almost every essay contains more grammatically correct sentences than incorrect ones. Instructors, however, tend to remember the error-filled sentences more clearly. Furthermore, research has shown that different readers will notice different errors and that some "grammatical errors"—like wordiness or passive voice—are really stylistic choices.

- "Errors in student writing increase with greater cognitive difficulty of the assignment." Research has supported the experience that many of us have had ourselves or observed in others: when faced with challenging material or a difficult rhetorical context, writers often find themselves making "easy" mistakes that they wouldn't under other, less cognitively challenging circumstances.

- "Students have more linguistic competence than the surface features of their prose sometimes indicate." Research has indicated that most students can identify and correct approximately half of their own errors through careful proofreading—but for various reasons, many students do not proofread their papers as carefully as they can and should.

Strategies for Teaching About Grammar and Helping Students Reduce Grammatical Errors

Given these facts, we can expect that coaching students to improve their grammar is part of the job of teaching a Comm-B or Writing-Intensive course. The question then becomes, how can we effectively (and efficiently) incorporate such instruction into our courses? Although we have no magic wand to offer, here are a number of suggestions based on our experiences teaching, working with "at-risk" students, and talking with instructors across the curriculum.

For the Entire Class

1. Assign papers with drafts that must be revised. Because the cognitive difficulty of a task can often force students to focus intensely on content and organization in early drafts, those early drafts may not reflect a student's full mastery of grammar and style. By building revision into your course, you may find that you receive fewer error-ridden papers.

2. Once you have instituted a policy of revision, set high standards and hold students accountable for progress from draft to draft. In particular, stress the need for editing and proofing before the final paper is submitted. You may want to make clear that although a grammatically perfect paper is not automatically an effective paper (thus the focus on content and organization early on is appropriate), nevertheless poor grammar is a distraction from an

otherwise stellar paper. Some instructors give students several minutes of class time to proof their papers one final time before handing them in. To convey those high standards, you might share with students models of good writing and include grammatical correctness as part of your grading criteria. You may even decide to tell your students in your grading criteria that a specific part of the final grade will be based on grammar and style, but be aware that students sometimes then fixate on grammatical issues prematurely or even to the exclusion of larger writing issues. You might instead use portfolios to gauge students' progress over the course of the semester.

3. Address the most common grammatical problems during class. Consider breaking students into groups and making each group responsible for coming up with a creative way to explain one common grammar problem and how to avoid it to the rest of the class. You might also cover grammatical issues quickly but consistently throughout the semester by discussing, at the beginning of each class session, the "sentence of the day." Each day, choose a sentence from students' papers that illustrates a grammatical point you want to convey, put it on the board, then take several minutes to discuss the sentence. You might ask students to identify the error and revise it or to discuss what is effective in a particular sentence. (If you decide to take sentences from students' papers, tell them early in the semester that you will be using anonymous examples from their writing throughout the course.)

4. Distribute to and discuss with students a sheet identifying the most common errors you see and explaining how to correct them.

5. Encourage students to take advantage of the Writing Center's courses on grammar and style. Detailed descriptions, dates, and registration information are available on the Writing Center's website (www.wisc.edu/writing).

For Individual Students

6. Mark errors on papers judiciously. As Bean explains, traditional procedures for marking student papers may exacerbate grammatical errors. When instructors correct all of the errors in students' papers, students are not forced find their own mistakes and learn to correct them. You might identify the *type* of error (fragments, possessives, "too" vs. "two" vs. "to") or demonstrate the *density* of error in one paragraph or on one page, then require students to do the revising themselves; frequently students' errors fall into distinct patterns. In fact, what may initially look like endless and unrelated errors may, if you analyze them, fall into a few definable categories of errors which students can work on systematically over the semester. Consider requiring a round of revisions focused particularly on grammatical issues: give the paper a grade, then explain that the grade will be lowered by one half (a B would become a BC) unless the grammatical revisions are completed by a certain day. With these strategies you can remain focused on the student's ideas while stressing the importance of mastering issues of grammar and style.

7. In individual conferences, ask students to read their texts aloud while you listen and look at their texts. Often students will "read" grammatically correct sentences even though the sentences are grammatically incorrect on the page. In these cases, encourage students to proofread more methodically by putting their finger on each word as they read aloud.

8. Have students make their own self-editing checklist. Because most students make the same errors, if you and the student are able to identify those errors, the student can proofread especially carefully for those errors.

For Particularly Challenging Students

9. If there are a great many problems in a paper, consider conferencing with that student individually. Rather than guessing why a student made certain errors and/or filling the page with red ink, you can ask the logic behind those decisions and help the student reformulate his or her understanding of grammatical rules.

10. The Writing Center can help all students with grammar—but have realistic expectations for what a Writing Center instructor can help your student learn. Like course instructors, Writing Center instructors set priorities. If a student arrives with a paper that is clearly unfocused, Writing Center instructors, expecting that an improved focus will improve the paper more substantively, are more likely to focus on that level of revision than on sentence fragments as they offer advice to students. You may want to encourage particularly challenged students to set up an ongoing appointment with the same Writing Center instructor. For more information on regular appointments or how the Writing Center can help a particular student, contact the Center's Director, Brad Hughes, at bthughes@wisc.edu or 263-3823.

11. You might also consider adopting a portfolio system for grading—one that allows students to demonstrate the progress they have made over a semester and to be graded on their best work.

Additional Resources

Chapter 4 of John Bean's Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011).
Joseph Williams' and Joseph Bizup's *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace* (New York: Longman, 2013)

Professor Emilia Tjernström designed an annotated bibliography assignment to help graduate students learn how to "read, comprehend, and effectively summarize policy research and policy-relevant academic research." She provides clear descriptions and examples of the types of sources that students should include in their bibliographies. Below, you will also see examples of her comments on student work and the assignment rubric.

Professor Emilia Tjernström
Policy Analysis 881, La Follette School of Public Affairs

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ASSIGNMENT IN POLICY ANALYSIS 881

Learning goals

In this assignment, you will begin building the portfolio of resources that will eventually form the foundation for your cost-benefit analysis. Successful completion of this assignment will feed directly in to the overall course objective of learning to "read, comprehend, and effectively summarize policy research and policy-relevant academic research." Specifically, after completing this assignment…

- you will have a firm grasp on different types of scholarly sources and how to access them.
- you will better understand how to break down a piece of writing into its component parts and analyze the arguments.
- you will be familiar with writing original annotations able to restate complex concepts in your own words, and write original annotations.

What is an annotated bibliography?

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, reports, etc. Each citation should be followed by two brief paragraphs: one that is descriptive and one that is evaluative. These two paragraphs constitute the annotation. The purpose of an annotation is twofold: *(i)* to summarize the main point of the source; and *(ii)* to assess of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the source cited. In this case, your evaluation should center on how informative the source is likely to be for your project.

The first paragraph should summarize the article in your own words. The second paragraph is a short discussion of how this source relates to or informs your project, and/or the limitations of the source. Try to address both the most important insights of the source and its weaknesses. Some questions that you can use to prod a source: Is the source reliable? How credible are the authors and/or their results? Do the authors leave out important content or information? Do the authors have a solid foundation for any causal arguments? To be clear, I expect this second paragraph to include a value judgment.
Creating an annotated bibliography will involve a variety of intellectual skills: careful literature search/review, concise exposition, and succinct analysis. The steps include:

1. Locate and record citations to sources that may contain useful information and ideas on your topic. This first list typically contains many more sources than the final annotated bibliography; you will whittle the list down as you analyze them. Briefly examine and review the items. Choose sources that provide a variety of perspectives on your topic.
2. Cite the source using the appropriate style. La Follette recommends Chicago style author-date (more here).
3. Write a concise annotation that summarizes the central theme and scope of the source. Include at least one sentence that
    a. evaluates the quality of the evidence,
    b. comments on the intended audience,
    c. compares/contrasts this work with another source that you cite, or
    d. explains how this work will be useful in your cost-benefit analysis.

Types of sources

Different types of scholarly sources serve different functions in research papers. You may have heard of primary, secondary and tertiary sources, which define sources by their so-called distance from the writer's subject. I would encourage you to instead categorize your sources based on how you will use them to construct your analysis and argument.
Table 1 shows an adapted version of Bizup's BEAM schema (Bizup, 2008). Please ensure that you cite at least two sources from the first three categories. You will eventually cite your evidence as well, but for now, focus on background, argument, and method sources.

An Annotated Bibliography Assignment in Policy Analysis 881, continued

Source type	Explanation	Examples
Background sources	Noncontroversial sources used to provide context: facts and information that are well-established in the field; the writer and reader can stipulate these as shared facts and information	- World Bank statistics on poverty rates and malnutrition prevalence in Mozambique. - Department of Energy statistics on the share of US yearly natural gas production that goes to exports.
Argument sources	Information from other authors you are agreeing with, disagreeing with, or building upon. Citing these sources puts your research in the context of other scholarship on your topic; it brings you into the conversation. *Note:* you can use your evidence sources (see below) as examples of why you disagree with, or want to add to what the argument sources claim.	- Studies/editorials positing that the program that you are studying is unlikely to work. *E.g.,* an academic article arguing that payments for ecosystem services (PES) will crowd out communities' intrinsic motivation to preserve the environment. - Studies that analyze similar topics (perhaps in other countries or regions); can be contradictory or incomplete. *E.g.,* a research report that establishes the effectiveness of local health clinics in improving villagers' health status that does not weigh the clinic's costs against its benefits.
Method	References to the theories or methods that the writer uses in the paper. Sometimes implicit, but can be explicit. Sources that developed the methodology/ies that you use in your analysis.	- Citations for benefit-transfer methods - Studies that use a similar methodology to the one you are planning to use - Econometrics textbooks or papers that describe the estimation technique(s) that you use
Evidence	Documents, data, field/lab observations or experiments that the writer analyzes. Writer uses the evidence to support his/her argument. In the case of your CBA, the evidence category includes all data sources that you use as inputs into your analysis.	- Client-provided data on labor costs associated with implementing the program that you are evaluating - Data from a study analyzing a similar topic that you use for benefit transfer calculations - Data from your client country's National Statistics Bureau

Common mistakes

The most common mistake that I see is confusing an annotation with an abstract. Abstracts are descriptive summaries, often found at the beginning of scholarly journal articles. Annotations are descriptive, analytical, and critical.

Below is an example of a first-draft annotation that exemplifies several common mistakes. I also include a revised version, which is much better.

Bonjean and Chambas 2004 https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1016/S0573-8555%2804%2968815-8

incomplete citation

This paper is a review of the literature on tax evasion activities in Africa. Suggests that tax evasion in the informal sector i.e., craftsmen and service providers like washers, water carriers, street peddlers, street sellers, and pavement food stalls, who are more susceptible to noncompliance do not do so intentionally but from ignorance of legislation or the complexity of the tax system. (Gautier, 2001, Ngoi, 1997, Roubaud, 1992)

informal language / incomplete sentences

Examines taxation strategies aimed at the informal/unrecorded sector in Benin and Burkina Faso. Proposes a unified, simplified business tax for micro businesses and innovative tax collection methods. A simplified unified business tax would be determined by objective indicators, e.g., for restaurants it could be the number of tables, chairs. Tax base would be calculated from a tax scale determined by objective and easily recognizable simple indicators. Suggests that simplicity would assist understanding and acceptance by the taxpayer. Simplification of the unified business tax based on specific indicators would allow tax to be entrusted to decentralized, local authorities.

Quite a lot of detail, but relevance is unclear.
No analysis/critique/added insight into the robustness or relevance of the source

Araujo-Bonjean, Catherine, and Gérard Chambas. "Taxing the urban unrecorded economy in sub-Saharan Africa." In *Taxing the hard-to-tax: Lessons from theory and practice*, pp. 313-329. Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2005

complete & correct citation

This study reviews the literature on taxation strategies aimed at improving the informal/unrecorded urban sector in Benin and Burkina Faso. Both Benin and Burkina Faso countries have low productivity, income, and capital investment. The authors examine illegal activities, informal activities, and tax evasion activities In 57 developing countries (data provided by Alm, et al. 1991). The authors evaluate the importance of underground activities by examining the unrecorded sector in various surveys. The main argument of the article is that tax evasion in the informal sector is not intentional but rather due to informal participants' ignorance of tax legislation or from an inability to grasp the complexity of the tax system.

complete sentences

The authors glean useful knowledge from a variety of surveys and use this information to recommend future taxation strategies options to policy-makers. For example, they offer realistic solutions that blend with local needs that may even increase local demand for efficient public expenditures. However, the study is poorly edited, and fails to cite several of the surveys that they draw upon, which would make follow-up research difficult for interested readers. Furthermore, the sample strategies and questionnaires differ between the authors' various evidentiary sources. They do not discuss how this potential lack of comparability may affect their interpretation of the data.

what the study does well

discusses methodological issues with the source — could be even better if student clarified how drawbacks affect the contribution of the study

Excellent	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**	
Points:	**10 9**	**8 7 6**	**5 4 3**	**2 1**
Source description	Each annotation's description points out specific relevant features of the source.	Each annotation establishes some relevance to the project.	Most annotations establish some relevance to the project, with one or two superficial or incorrect descriptions.	Some or few annotations establish the source's relevance to the project; many are superficial, incorrect and/or copy from the abstract.
Annotation quality	Annotation shows careful reading and clear understanding of source content, quality and relevance.	Annotation shows reading and decent understanding of source content, quality and relevance.	Annotation shows reading and decent understanding of source content, quality and relevance, with weaknesses or omissions in no more than one or two entries.	Annotation shows superficial understanding of source content, quality and relevance, with weaknesses or omissions in most entries.
Citation	Bibliography cites all sources correctly consistently following a standard bibliographic format.	Bibliography cites all sources correctly and consistently following a standard bibliographic format, with no more than two errors.	Bibliography citations follow a standard bibliographic format, with several citation errors.	Bibliography citations follow no discernible bibliographic format or pattern of frequent citation errors.
Writing	Free of distracting spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors; no fragments, comma splices, or run-ons.	Few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors, allowing reader to follow ideas clearly. Very few fragments or run-ons.	Most spelling, punctuation, and grammar correct allowing reader to progress through report. Some errors remain.	Frequent spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors create distraction, making reading difficult; fragments, comma splices, run-ons evident.

References

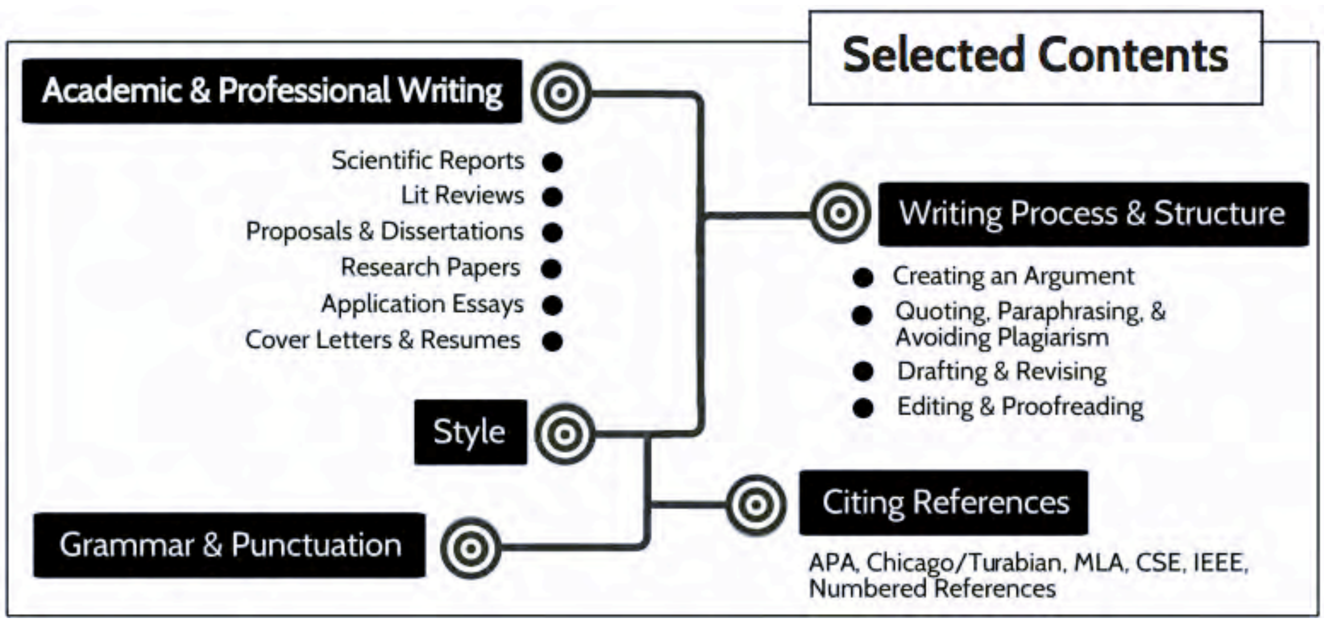
Bizup, Joseph. "BEAM: A Rhetorical Vocabulary for Teaching Research-Based Writing." Rhetoric Review 27.1 (2008): 72-86. Communication & Mass Media Complete. Web. 4 February 2014.

The UW-Madison Writing Center's Online Handbook

Available through the UW–Madison Writing Center's website, the UW–Madison Writer's Handbook is a reference guide designed for academic and professional writing. Drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors every month, the Writer's Handbook provides over 100 pages of high-quality instructional material for undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines.

The Writing Center hopes that these materials can help you integrate writing instruction tailored to particular assignments in your courses. With information about a number of common genres of writing and expert advice for approaching various stages of the writing process, these resource materials offer writers at all levels general guidelines, sample papers, and recommended strategies for approaching the writing process.

If you have ideas or requests for new topics to add to the Writer's Handbook, please feel free to suggest those to the Director of the Writing Center, Brad Hughes, bthughes@wisc.edu. •



TEACHING MULTILINGUAL WRITERS

Kate Vieira gives an overview of the characteristics, skills, and assets of multilingual writers. She follows with the results of three interviews conducted with multilingual writers at UW-Madison.

Kate Vieira
Writing Across the Curriculum

AN INTRODUCTION TO MULTILINGUAL WRITERS AT UW-MADISON

As most instructors know, multilingual writers form an integral part of the educational community at UW-Madison. What instructors often don't know is how to meet the needs of multilingual writers, especially in writing-intensive and Communication-B courses. In other words, we realize it is integral to the UW's mission to teach in ways that are inclusive of linguistically diverse students, but it is often hard to know what is pedagogically useful and what is fair. The first step toward answering some of these questions is a simple one: to get to know the multilingual writers at the UW and in your particular class.

Isn't "multilingual" a mouthful?
Multilingual writers in English have been defined by different labels: English as a Second Language (ESL) students, second-language writers, non-native English speakers, English-language learners, generation 1.5 students, etc. I prefer the term "multilingual writers" simply because it is more accurate. English for many students could be their third, fourth, or even one of their many native languages. But beyond this, the word "multilingual" emphasizes multilingual students' assets—not what they lack, but what they bring to the table because of the way they've lived their lives.

Who are the multilingual writers on our campus?
The most important thing to recognize about multilingual writers is that they vary enormously. They have differing levels of fluency in their home languages and in academic English. They have different racial, class, and educational backgrounds, as well as different learning styles and needs. Given this variety, your most important source of information about how to help multilingual writers succeed in your class are the writers themselves.

Here, however, are some general observations. Multilingual writers at the UW include both international students and students from within the U.S. International students have often studied English for years in their home countries before coming to the U.S., though many also take a series of ESL courses at the UW. These writers often learned English through grammar rules and textbook instruction and thus are very conversant in the vocabulary of English grammar. Multilingual writers from within the U.S. often come from communities (many here in Madison) where English is not the common language, or where English is used in school but another language is spoken at home. These writers have sometimes learned English by ear, from the TV or friends, and thus might have ESL-like features in their writing even though they might consider themselves native speakers of English (Reid).

How can we acknowledge multilingual writers' talents and challenges?
Whether they are international or from the U.S., many multilingual writers realize that they are often held to an unfair "native-speaker" standard of idiomatic perfection by well-meaning instructors. But as anyone who has written in a foreign language knows, and as research attests, such perfection is nearly impossible to achieve. Given these linguistic facts, instructors would do well to avoid focusing on minor errors and instead to cultivate the resources multilingual writers bring to the classroom. Of course, in addition to understanding multilingual writers' talents, we should also help them learn the conventions of our fields and improve their writing in other ways.

In order to deliver such instruction effectively, however, we must first understand students' linguistic strengths. While writing abilities vary among multilingual writers, just as they do among monolingual writers, knowing more than one language can benefit students' writing in a number of ways. Being fluent in two or more languages often makes writers more self aware of rhetorical and grammatical choices in their writing and affords them a potentially richer vocabulary than those who know only one language. Many multilingual writers are resourceful in their communication practices and adapt well to changing situations. Plus multilingual writers often excel at cross-cultural communication (Canagarajah).

Who are the multilingual writers in my class?
You should learn about the writing backgrounds of all your students by giving them a short survey at the beginning of the semester asking them about their language and writing experiences. (See page 148.) You might want to find out, for example, which languages students are literate in, what experiences they have had with academic writing in these languages and in English, and if they have any concerns about the writing they will be doing for your class.

Asking all students directly about their writing backgrounds has three immediate benefits. First, it keeps instructors from making assumptions about students' writing abilities based on their race, last name, or "accent." Second, it gives instructors valuable information about individual writers that can help them teach both multilingual and monolingual writers more effectively. In other words, it offers us a glimpse into the way students conceive of themselves as writers in English, which can help instructors plan lessons or individual conferences that speak directly to student needs. Third, it communicates to students that instructors are interested in their development as writers, not just in their writing as detached from their linguistic history. In my experience, this investment in the relationship between instructor and writer is key to motivating students and to creating an inclusive classroom environment.

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To better understand how to support multilingual writers at the UW, we interviewed three successful undergraduates. Of course, these three students do not represent all multilingual writers on this campus. Yet it is still instructive to hear about their productive experiences with writing here at UW, through which they learned about the conventions of a particular field, solved a challenging problem, or discovered something about themselves. In the interviews that follow, they share their stories and their advice for instructors.

Mijung Kim is a junior majoring in communication arts. She moved to the U.S. from Korea for her bachelor's degree.

What was your best experience with writing at the UW?
My best experience was in a Comm-Arts class last semester. When I asked the professor about my writing topic and argument, she wanted to talk with me more. So I followed her to her office, and we discussed the reason why I wanted to make the argument that I did. She asked questions like, "Why do you think this?" and "Why don't you add a discussion of that?" She listened to my points and she really liked my idea!

Then I asked her very carefully if she would mind reading my writing before it was due. She said she would happily do that. I was really glad, because sometimes instructors think it is unfair to other students to pre-read. But I sent her my paper. She said that my ideas were good and made sense, but that the style could be better. She didn't correct my grammar, but she had an opinion about almost all my sentences. She helped me to make certain expressions more idiomatic and told me her opinions about my arguments. It was a very special experience for me, and I learned a lot from it.

What kinds of challenges and talents do you bring to the class as a multilingual writer?
My biggest challenge is with time. In essay tests, for example, native-speakers can think as they are writing, but I don't have time to think. I have asked to have more time than other students, but professors don't let me. So, I memorize by heart all my notes and even examples before the exam. Also, for take-home papers, I have to revise a lot. In many of my communication arts classes, for example, almost everyone is a native-speaker. So it seems that they can just write an essay quickly and start the day before. But I can't do that. I have to revise three or four more times than a native-speaker.

Also, learning the American academic writing style was challenging for me. Unlike the Korean academic style, it seemed to me to require repeating points over and over again. Moreover, I had only read popular magazines in English before coming here. And they have a very different style—no thesis statement! So I had to learn to write in the American style through a lot of trial and error.

As for talents, Korean culture helps me to have a different kind of point of view toward everything. For example, in my communication arts major I had to write a movie script. Because I had learned in class what makes Hollywood films interesting and exciting, I based my script on the Hollywood style. But I also added some pop Korean culture to it. I made it more moving, because Koreans often like to see some warmth in a film. So I added those kinds of elements to the script, and my TA really liked it.

Mohamed Yusuf graduated in 2007 with a B.A. in business (operations and technology management). He is from Somalia originally, and Somali is his native language, though he lived in Egypt from the age of 11, where he studied Arabic and completed high school. He moved to the U.S. for his college education.

What was your best experience with writing at the UW?
My best experiences were in a business communications class and a philosophy class. In the business communications class, the instructor knew that my writing needed special attention and graded it accordingly. For example, when we wrote memos and had to correct mistakes in letters, she would comfort me if I couldn't find all the mistakes. She told me not to worry if I couldn't get everything, but to try my best. This attitude really encouraged me to work hard and do my best in that class because I knew an "A" was achievable. The professor also told all the international students in the class that she would consider the ways our cultural backgrounds impacted our writing and participation in the class. Her paying attention to my culture was really important, because my culture has a great impact on my worldview.

In the philosophy class, I had a chance to express my ideas and write a meaningful argument. We discussed important topics like the duty to reduce starvation, gun ownership, and animal rights. It is easy to argue a point when you are speaking, but writing an argument and following the rules was challenging. At first I had a lot to say, and my thoughts weren't organized, so my argument didn't make sense. I let my passion override my logic. When I started following the rules of writing arguments and learned how to approach and develop certain points, I was better at making myself clear. I think that's an important tool nowadays to decrease miscommunication between different cultures and to reach a better understanding of others' points of view.

What recommendations would you give instructors for helping multilingual writers?
Know students' cultural backgrounds; show empathy; ask students what problems they have with writing; show them examples of successful writing; show them how to polish their drafts; make them love writing by raising their interest level; and don't put them on the spot unless you forewarn them.

Erika Lopez is a senior majoring in political science and economics. She moved to the U.S. from Ecuador at the age of 13.

What was your best experience with writing at the UW?
In one English class I took, I had assignments that allowed me to express my thoughts. I could write what I wanted to. But the professor was tough! Even if he thought it was a great paper, he would still give me points to work on. Sometimes it made me mad—to work so hard on a paper and still have red marks and criticism. But I appreciated his comments because they were clear. I also appreciated an assignment in another English class that allowed me to analyze my own writing and learn about myself as a person and as a writer.

What are the challenges and talents you bring to a class as a multilingual writer?
My challenge and my talent are the same: I can be very descriptive! Part of the reason I am descriptive is because I continue to be unsure about my English and want to make sure my writing is understandable to the audience. In Spanish, for example, sometimes there is just one word that would explain everything I want to say. But in English, it might take me a whole paragraph to explain.

It can be frustrating, though, when I try very hard to make something clear, and am very descriptive, and the professor still doesn't understand me. I don't want professors to kill themselves trying to understand my writing. But they should ask: "Is this person trying to be clear? Is this person trying to communicate?" Of course, if I am being unclear, I want to know. But I also appreciate it when professors understand the effort I am making.

What advice do you have for instructors?
I need guidance about the specifics of what instructors are looking for. Examples and models help a lot. Also, keep in mind the language barrier! Some ideas might not come out clear because of cultural or linguistic issues. Instructors should be conscious of this.

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Global English
Consider the following trends: Globally, "non-native" English speakers are gradually outnumbering "native" speakers (Graddol). This shift is occurring in part because the population of "native" English speakers is declining, and in part because English is becoming the lingua-franca of many "non-native" English speakers. Such demographic realities mean that in place of one standard English, World Englishes with various standards are being developed that deserve respect (Canagarajah). In fact, some researchers now predict the demise of the "native-speaker" standard of English. In light of these shifting global circumstances, and as scholarship itself becomes more globalized, Standard Edited American English might soon become just one of many dialects.

What might the consequences of such a shift be for instructors who use writing in their courses? I propose the following possibility: Instead of helping multilingual writers adapt their writing to monolingual standards, we might instead spend some of our instructional time teaching monolingual writers to understand, adapt to, and write in different varieties of English. Some researchers believe that the time for such pedagogical change is now, and that we should be teaching both monolingual and multilingual writers to switch among and even to merge different dialects and languages to communicate with increasingly diverse global audiences.

Based on teaching experience and research in applied linguistics and writing studies, the following strategies are best practices to follow when working with multilingual students at any stage of the writing process.

STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH MULTILINGUAL WRITERS

Preparing students for writing assignments

- Try to make your expectations for successful writing in your course as explicit as possible. You can make expectations explicit in your syllabus, assignment handouts, evaluation criteria, and in the way you present all of these materials to students in class.

- Incorporate models into your curriculum. For example, if you're assigning a thesis-driven paper, supply your students with models of thesis-driven essays from your course or discipline. If you're assigning a lab report, make sure students have seen what a successful lab report looks like. Models may be articles that you've already built into the syllabus or anonymous samples obtained from students who've given you permission to use their essays as teaching materials.

- Spend time in class discussing and critiquing features of the models, and be sure to remind your students that, when using models, they are to emulate conventions and form—not the specific content.

Evaluating and responding to writing

- Focus first—in your reading, in your comments, in your conversations with student writers, and in your grading—on content and global concerns. (See page 55.)

- Remember to respond as an interested and expert reader, not just as an editor. A brief acknowledgement of how much time and effort it must take to write in another language also can motivate and encourage multilingual writers.

- If there are many problems with grammar and they interfere with students' communicating their meaning or ideas, choose a selected portion of the paper to comment on language issues. Explain to the writer, in an end-note or in-person, why you chose to comment in that way.

- Rather than commenting on all grammatical problems, try to identify just two or three of the most common kinds of problems that make it difficult for you to understand a sentence. Treat these as patterns you help the writer begin to see for him or herself. When commenting on these patterns:

    - Try not to simply cross out and write in the correction—use your mark to teach the student why it is wrong and how they can fix it.
    - Use the same kinds of marks (checks, underlines, circles) for the same kinds of errors so that students can see the patterns you are showing them.
    - Use these marks to show how the parts of the sentence work together (an arrow between the subject and the verb, for example).

Working with writers in one-on-one conferences

- Students who learned English orally—through their friends, the TV, or the radio—have strengths as orally fluent learners and can depend on their ear to hear what is wrong in their writing. One-on-one conferences are an opportunity for you to encourage that work. For example, you can read a student's sentence out loud to them and ask, "How else could you say that?"

- Other multilingual writers are very fluent in the vocabulary of English grammatical rules (sometimes more than native speakers) because they have learned English in classrooms or from textbooks. During conferences, encourage this skill by letting students take the lead in grammar work as you watch, stepping in only when they can't see a problem.

- Keep grammatical handouts from the writing center website or from style guides at your desk to refer students to as you work together on their writing. Have students look up a rule themselves and practice fixing the error in the conference.

- Encourage your multilingual students to keep a personalized list of their own error patterns. Have them add to this list as they write and revise and proofread their own writing according to their own common mistakes. This list could include such common errors as idiomatic word choice, article use, or counter-intuitive spelling.

The following brief essay offers advice about how to know which errors should take priority when commenting on multilingual students' writing.

Kate Vieira and Rebecca Lorimer
Writing Across the Curriculum

ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES FOR CHOOSING WHICH ERRORS TO MARK

Instructors with multilingual writers in their classes often hear the good advice not to mark *every* language error in students' papers. After all, some features of English, such as prepositions, are idiomatic, so they require years and years of memorization. Often these features seem easy to native speakers of English, making the errors seem (falsely) indicative of students' carelessness.

Moreover, marking every error tends to inhibit writers, which can actually make their writing worse as opposed to improving it. Research has shown that writers who receive too much negative feedback tend to take fewer risks and write less, thus diminishing the quality of their writing. Finally, commenting on all surface errors leaves instructors little energy for the more important intellectual work of responding to a paper's content and ideas.

Yet, as most instructors know, there are times when it pays to take errors seriously. And many multilingual writers are eager for instruction in grammar and word choice. So how can you know which errors to respond to and which to let go? While some broad guidelines are provided below, there are no hard-and-fast rules for responding to errors in multilingual writers' papers. Your choice ultimately depends on your priorities for what students learn from the writing assignment.

You might consider, for example, what your goals are for the writing assignment and whether the paper is at an early stage of development or finished. If the assignment calls for a formal, highly polished piece of writing and you're reading the final version, then it is probably appropriate to respond to most surface errors. If the assignment, on the other hand, consists of brainstorming ideas or informal free writing or an early draft that will be revised, then it is probably more appropriate to respond only to content.

Another consideration is the frequency of errors in a paper. If a paper has many errors, you might find it efficient to focus on only one or two errors that repeat throughout a paper. Or if a paper has only two errors, you might respond to both of them. Finally, you might also consider your students' wishes and their development as writers. Some students are eager to have most errors corrected, while others would feel overwhelmed by this approach. Both your goals and your students' goals for a paper assignment, then, can help determine how and when you respond to surface errors.

That said, many instructors find this rule helpful: **respond to errors that interfere with meaning and don't pay too much attention to those that don't**. As second-language writing researcher Tony Silva has pointed out, just as people speak with accents, so too do writers write with accents. So you might consider those errors that do not interfere with meaning as examples of "accent," and those that do interfere with meaning as communicative issueS worth addressing.

Kate says:
To illustrate this distinction, consider the following example from a student's paper I received a year ago about alternative energy resources.

Also, it might bring better a new form of energy if only advantages of several alternatives energies sum.

In this sentence, errors clearly interfere with the meaning the writer is trying to get across. Even after having read this students' paper on alternative energy resources, I still didn't know what this sentence meant. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, I suspected that the student himself was unsure of what he was trying to say. This unclear sentence presented me with an opportunity to ask some critical questions, to help push this writer's thinking forward, and to clarify his point. Here is my comment:

I'm not sure I follow. Did you mean that there is or could be one new form of energy that combines the advantages of all energy alternatives? If so, what might this look like?

This comment signaled that communication between writer (him) and reader (me) had broken down, *and* that I would like to hear more details about the implications of his claims in subsequent drafts. Note that the comment also models one way to articulate what I think the writer was trying to say. Many multilingual writers find such modeling useful as a way of learning what works in conventional academic prose in English.

How did I have the time to write three sentences of response to his one sentence? I chose not to spend responding time correcting errors that *did not* interfere with meaning. For example, I did not mark as wrong the following sentences that appeared later in the same student's paper, when the writer was describing why energy resources were necessary for the development of technology:

The high-developed technology and sufficient resources are inseparable "twins," such as relationship between needle and thread. To develop higher technology, strong supportable energy resources should be sustained.

Many instructors would notice right away that this sentence is not perfect. For example, there should not be a definite article before "high-developed technology" and there should be a definite article before "relationship." But definite articles in English usually don't add much to a sentence's meaning. Because articles are notoriously difficult to learn, second-language writing researcher Deborah Healey has ironically pointed out that articles serve only to distinguish between "native" and "non-native" English speakers. In addition to the unidiomatic usage of articles, this sentence also has problems with word choice ("high-developed," for example).

But despite these slips, I understood the writer's point. In fact, I admired it. For example, note how the writer here makes use of an analogy, "needle and thread," to represent visually the interdependence of technology development and resources. The second sentence further develops this idea, articulating the nature of this interdependence: energy resources are needed to develop technology. In other words, in the context of this paper, these two sentences elaborate and clearly communicate an important idea. Moreover, the assignment's main goals did not call for perfect idiomatic prose. My goal for the paper was for students to write an organized, well-researched, persuasive argument, which this student succeeded in doing. Plus, this paper contained other sentences where errors did interfere with meaning where I chose to concentrate. If I were to mark anything on these lines, then, it might be the following: "Good point. Well explained."

Rebecca says:
When responding to multilingual students' writing, consider creating a hierarchy of writing concerns—writing issues in order of their importance—that will be a priority for you in your class. My own looks like this:

1. Understanding the assignment, purpose for writing, and audience
2. Clear focus, theme, argument, and/or thesis
3. Clear, logical organization
4. Fully supported and developed ideas
5. Discipline-appropriate style, tone, and voice
6. Clarity of usage and mechanics
    a. Correct sentence boundaries (run-on sentences, fragments)
        Even though she was still sick.
    b. Appropriate subject-verb agreement
        He walk every morning.
    c. Correct, consistent verb tense and form
        I was working on my paper since 6am.
        I was cook dinner last night when you called.
    d. Agreement between singulars and plurals
        I have turned in all my homeworks this week.
        I set up six more desk for the afternoon class.
    e. Correct word order and form
        I'm happy to live in a democracy country.
        I feel very confusing this morning.
    f. Correct spelling
    g. Appropriate prepositions and articles
        We must protect the nature.
        "to mention about" or "to discuss about"

When commenting on a multilingual student's writing, this hierarchy of usage and mechanics is especially important for me—prioritizing error in this way helps me remember not to mark everything and to focus on patterns of error that interfere with meaning. Depending on the student's writing development, progress in the class, and understanding of the assignment, I choose to respond to the most frequent errors, those highest on the hierarchy, or the ones students have pointed out to me they struggle with the most.

I incorporate this hierarchy into my evaluation criteria—students can see the priorities in my rubric—and actually print it out as a list and keep it next to me as I write comments. Specifically, I ordered the "clarity of usage and mechanics" hierarchy according to what language acquisition research has shown us: 1) Certain errors interfere with communicative meaning more than others, and 2) we should prioritize errors that language learners can improve over the course of a semester (rather than the course of a lifetime).

Drawing from research and practice, the following strategies suggest ways to evaluate multilingual students' writing in a fair and helpful manner.

Elisabeth Miller
Writing Across the Curriculum

EVALUATING AND GRADING MULTILINGUAL WRITING

One of the most common questions that Writing Across the Curriculum Programs hear from instructors across disciplines is how to fairly assess the work of multilingual writers. Many instructors are deeply committed to upholding standards for clarity and correctness in academic and professional writing. At the same time, many believe that students whose first language is not English should be given room to make mistakes as they engage in the difficult task of writing in a second (sometimes third, fourth, or more) language. But does giving that room mean being unfair to other students?

This question is an important one—with no easy answer. To give you a sense of the various ways that instructors across disciplines assess multilingual students' writing, here are a few approaches—and some of their related pros and cons—reported in recent Writing Across the Curriculum research.

1. **Students' "clear communication is critical": Holding all students to the same standards is fair**

In a survey of over 100 faculty at 2- and 4-year colleges and in-depth interviews with 12 of those instructors, Zawacki and Habib (2014) found that many professors are committed to penalizing all students—including multilingual writers—for writing errors. They cite the absolute necessity of clear communication in academic study and future occupations as the reason for marking and taking off points for errors. One professor in this study explains that she grades student papers without looking at the names, using the same standards because "No one's going to give them a break when they're working…You just get left behind, so why not get told that now when you're a student rather than get hit in the face with it when you get out there working" (198).

One mathematics professor also reports that precision in language is central for success in his discipline: "if we say that there is 'a' solution, we know that there may be another solution, but if we say "the" solution, that means there cannot be another solution. So in this case knowing the articles is very important and this goes back to how they translate their thinking to English" (199).

Pros: A commitment to improving students' writing and disciplinary knowledge is clear in this approach—as is a deep level of care for students' long-term success. Zawacki and Habib find that many instructors who penalize multilingual writers for language errors also offer a great deal of support to writers outside of class: meeting in office hours, setting goals with students for revision, sharing resources for learning grammatical rules, and more. With support, a commitment to helping students understand and address errors is often appreciated by multilingual writers and helpful in their development.

Cons: The process of marking and holding students responsible for all of their errors runs the risk of overwhelming and overloading students. Moreover, emphasis on sentence-level errors often comes at the expense of acknowledging and supporting the development of multilingual writers' ideas. What's more, paying extensive attention to language errors is tremendously time-consuming for instructors.

2. **"I take a hands-off approach": Focusing on meaning, not sentence-level errors**

Grammatical errors play a much less significant role for some instructors who focus their comments on larger rhetoricl issues and meaning, rather than the sentence-level. Ives et al. (2014) share one history instructor's perspective regarding the relative importance of content over grammar: students "really have to show that they know the subject material. And they have to show that they have some kind of argument...Organization to me is very crucial, but I see it as tied in with argument...You can't fail a paper for spelling and grammar and mechanics alone" (227).

Similarly, some instructors put disciplinary knowledge ahead of writing skills, and still others question whether they (as subject-area, but not *writing*, specialists) are the right people to be teaching students about grammatical rules and writing skills (Cox 2014).

Pros: Focusing on students' meaning within their papers communicates to multilingual writers that their ideas do matter, emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and "higher order" or "global concerns" like making a clear argument, using appropriate evidence, and meeting an assignment (See "Global and Local Concerns" in "Section 10: Responding, Evaluating and Grading"). Zawacki and Habib find that when instructors are strongly focused on identifying multilingual writing errors, they often miss meaningful content in their students' writing. A conscious decision to "read for meaning" counters that trend.

Cons: However, because they are "still in the process of acquiring the language," multilingual writers do need feedback on their language use (Cox 2014). And, thus, choosing not to give feedback on sentence-level errors denies students useful learning opportunities. Even if an instructor is not a writing expert, he or she can note certain patterns of repeated errors, confusing phrasing, or incorrect use of terms. Indeed, Dana Ferris's extensive research with error and multilingual writers indicates that feedback as simple as circling errors or putting a check mark in the margin can facilitate multilingual writers' own successful self-editing (2011).

3. **"It would be unfair to use the same criteria": Redefining what we mean by "standards"**

Multilingual writing specialist Michelle Cox (2014) calls on faculty to refigure what we mean by "error" and "standards." She argues that expecting the same level of language proficiency from multilingual writers is, itself, unfair. Cox says that multilingual "students are doing something much more difficult than are English L1 students: they are learning and being evaluated on their learning in a second language. To make evaluation truly equitable, faculty would need to ask English L1 students to complete writing assignments in a second language" (313). Because the process of writing and learning to write in a second language is distinctly different from writing and learning to write in a first language, says Cox, we simply cannot equitably hold students to the same standards.

Pros: This approach takes a kind of middle-ground between penalizing for grammatical or sentence-level errors and ignoring multilingual writers' errors and commenting only on content. Instead, Cox argues for acknowledging the uniquely difficult task of writing in a second language and supporting writers accordingly. She recommends marking patterns of repeated errors and giving students time and support to revise. A sense of responsibility is still a part of this approach: multilingual writers "can be expected to edit areas of their drafts pointed out by readers as being incomprehensible due to grammatical errors," says Cox (314). Cox advocates for including sentence-level errors in one of the final categories in assignment rubrics.

Cons: Certainly, this approach contrasts with the first one listed on the previous page—concerns with setting up a double-standard for multilingual writers. And undoubtedly multilingual writers will encounter rigid and exclusionary standards for their writing as they proceed through college and into employment. Cox and many other writing researchers, though, continue to advocate for redefining those very standards that mandate "correctness."

See the following resources for more information on approaches to assessing multilingual writing:

Ferris, Dana. *Treatment of Error in Second Language Student Writing.* 2nd ed. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011.

Cox, Michelle. "In Response to Today's 'Felt Need': WAC, Faculty Development, and Second Language Writers." *WAC and Second Language Writers: Research Towards Linguistically and Culturally Inclusive Programs and Practices.* Zawacki, Terry Myers, & Cox, Michelle. (Eds.). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press: 2014, 299-326. (Available at http://wac.colostate.edu/books/l2/)

Ives, Lindsey, et al. "'I don't know if that was the right thing to do': Cross-Disciplinary/Cross-Institutional Faculty Respond to L2 Writing." *WAC and Second Language Writers: Research Towards Linguistically and Culturally Inclusive Programs and Practices.* Zawacki, Terry Myers, & Cox, Michelle. (Eds.). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press: 2014, 211-232. (Available at http://wac.colostate.edu/books/l2/)

Zawacki, Terry Myers, and Anna Sophia Habib. "Negotiating 'Errors' in L2 Writing: Faculty Dispositions and Language Difference." *WAC and Second Language Writers: Research Towards Linguistically and Culturally Inclusive Programs and Practices.* Zawacki, Terry Myers, & Cox, Michelle. (Eds.). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press: 2014, 183-210. (Available at http://wac.colostate.edu/books/l2/)

The following resources are available for instructors as they develop their pedagogy for teaching multilingual writers.

RESOURCES FOR WORKING WITH MULTILINGUAL WRITERS

Campus Resources

Consult with UW's **ESL staff**, 5134 Helen C. White (http://www.english.wisc.edu/esl, 263-3780). The ESL program offers a sequence of courses to improve the skills of multilingual students in reading, speaking, and writing English.

Encourage students to seek out the **Writing Center**, 6171 Helen C. White Hall (http://writing.wisc.edu, 263-1992). Please have realistic expectations, though, for how much and how quickly the Writing Center can help. It takes time, sustained instruction, and hard work on a student's part to make significant progress.

Contact the **GUTS Tutorial Program,** 333 East Campus Mall, Suite 4413 (http://guts.studentorg.wisc.edu, 263-5666). This program connects UW students with volunteer tutors for assistance with academic courses, study skills, conversational English, and intercultural exchange.

Online Resources

CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers: www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/secondlangwriting

Writing Across Borders, directed by Wayne Robertson of Oregon State University: Available on YouTube

Only thirty minutes long, this film presents international students' perspectives on writing in U.S. universities, accompanied by advice for instructors from ESL specialists. The website offers a discussion guide for those who are using the film for professional development purposes.

Print Resources

Canagarajah, A. Suresh. "Toward a Writing Pedagogy of Shuttling Between Languages: Learning from Multilingual Writers." *College English* 68.6 (2006): 589–604.

Ferris, Dana. "The 'Grammar Correction' Debate in L2 Writing." *Journal of Second Language Writing* 13.1 (2004): 49–62.

Fraiberg, Steven. "Composition 2.0: Toward a Multilingual and Multimodal Framework." *College Composition and Communication* 62.1 (2010): 100–26.

Hinkel, Eli. *Teaching Academic ESL Writing: Practical Techniques in Vocabulary and Grammar*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004.

Horner, Bruce, Min-Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones Royster, and John Trimbur. "Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach." *College English* 73.3 (2011): 303–21.

Leki, Ilona. *Understanding ESL Writers: A Guide for Teachers*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1992.

Matsuda, Paul. "The Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity in U.S. College Composition." *College English* 68.6 (2006): 637–51.

Raimes, Ann. "What Unskilled ESL Students Do as They Write: A Classroom Study of Composing." *TESOL Quarterly* 19.2 (1985): 229–58.

Roberge, Mark, Meryl Siegal, and Linda Harklau. *Generation 1.5 in College Composition: Teaching Academic Writing to U.S.-Educated Learners of ESL*. NY: Routledge, 2009.

Smitherman, Geneva, and Victor Villanueva, eds. *Language Diversity in the Classroom: From Intention to Practice*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2003.

Zamel, Vivian. "Strangers in Academia: The Experiences of Faculty and ESL Students Across the Curriculum." *College Composition and Communication* 46.4 (1995): 506–21.

Zamel, Vivian and Ruth Spack, eds. Crossing the Curriculum: Multilingual Learners in College Classrooms. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2004.

Conferencing and Student Peer Review

Brad Hughes offers some concrete tips for how best to organize and manage some of the most important writing instruction students receive.

Brad Hughes
Writing Across the Curriculum

CONDUCTING STUDENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Although you're likely to find them time consuming and exhausting, the individual conferences you hold with your students will be time well spent: by talking directly and individually with students about their writing, you can have a profound influence on how they interpret your assignments and your comments on their work, on how they approach a draft or a revision, on how motivated they are to write; and you'll understand your students as writers and thinkers far better than you ever can from only seeing their written work. Remember that talking--about ideas, about drafts, about revisions--is an essential part of writing, and that conferences provide ideal opportunities for that talk.

You will, of course, adjust your conference strategies to suit the student you're talking with, the purpose of the conference, and the time of the semester; but here are some general suggestions that may help you and your students make the most of conferences.

1. Before each round of conferences, think through your purposes for them. Some of many overlapping possibilities:

- establishing a good working relationship with your students
- reassuring anxious students
- motivating students to get started, persist, or work harder on their writing
- helping students generate ideas or arguments or plans for papers
- clarifying your expectations for papers
- answering questions students have
- elaborating on your written comments
- checking students' understanding (of written comments, of course material, of assignments . . .)
- understanding why students have done what they've done in papers
- individualizing your teaching
- helping students make a thesis or argument more complex
- helping students focus a topic or argument
- helping students anticipate and plan to address counter-arguments
- coaching students to be more precise or accurate or thorough in their representation of others' ideas
- coaching students through the process of writing an effective introduction
- modeling how to organize ideas within a paragraph
- helping students see the need for transitions between sections and creating some transitions
- teaching how to identify and correct a grammatical problem

2. Before your first round of conferences, talk in class and give students a brief handout about what to expect during the conferences. Spell out the logistics: where to meet you, how long the conferences will last, what to bring, what to prepare, how to reschedule. And briefly explain the purpose of the conferences and make some suggestions for how students can get the most from them. And remind students that conferences are a mandatory part of the course.

3. At the beginning of each conference, work to establish rapport and to put students at ease (especially early in the semester) and be sure to set an agenda for the conference, one that's realistic given the time you have. Be selective: a 15-minute conference goes by quickly, so there's time to talk thoroughly about only a few writing issues.

4. Keep the conference focused on what most needs work and on what's appropriate for the writer at that stage of working on that particular paper. If, for example, a student needs to work on developing ideas more fully or on clarifying a main point, concentrate on that; don't get sidetracked into talking extensively about problems with grammar or punctuation or word choice. It's fine to say near the end of a conference that once she's worked on these larger issues, the student will need to work carefully on catching and correcting sentence-level problems. If necessary, suggest another meeting with you to focus on those issues.

5. To help focus and establish agendas for conferences and to encourage students to think critically about their writing, consider having students write out some questions in advance. If the conference is to discuss a draft of a paper, ask students to submit questions with their drafts.

6. These questions should be specific: not “What did you think of this paper?” but “Do you think I stray from my main point in the long paragraph on page three?”; “What do you see as my main point?” or “Should this closing story be my opening hook?” Early in the semester, work with the class to generate a list of model questions, and then hand out copies of the printed list. (Robert Connors and Cheryl Glenn, *The St. Martin’s Guide to Writing*, 3rd ed. New York: St. Martin’s, 1995, 41.)

7. If the purpose of the conference is to review written comments you’ve made on previous papers and guide future progress, ask students to come prepared with specific questions about your comments on previous papers--and tell them they’ll be in charge of setting the agenda.

8. During conferences, get students talking--generating ideas, articulating plans, experimenting with language, posing questions, responding critically to their own ideas and drafts. You may need to work to resist the urge to do all the talking, and because some students will be uncomfortable meeting with you individually, they’ll be glad to let you do all the talking. Learn to ask focused questions or make requests: e.g., “Tell me what you’re planning to write about.” “In what order?” “Tell me why.”

9. Encourage students to ask you questions, and be concerned if students aren’t asking any. Ask students to tell you how you can help them.

10. Listen carefully. Incorporate what students say in your advice and in your questions. Robert Connors and Cheryl Glenn explain some of the many things we should listen for and address in conferences:

If your purpose in a conference is to respond only to the student’s text, you might as well take the papers home and leave the student out of the process altogether. Instead, you should be making room for students to articulate what they know or sense, allowing them to realize what they know . . . . Ideally, you respond to the student’s response to the text. You respond fully and immediately, not only to what is on the page but to what isn’t on the page: intention, process, ideas for revision, and so forth . . . . Gradually, your students will begin to see you as an interested and knowledgeable reader rather than as a nitpicking critic or a grammar enforcer. When students accept you as a reader, their work is transformed from putting words on a page in order to fulfill the assignment to real communication. (41)

11. Encourage students to write down specifics that emerge from your conversation: ideas, plans for revisions, clarifications, rough thesis statements, outlines . . . . You should be concerned if students aren’t writing anything down and you should prompt them to do so. Thoughts and conversations are very ephemeral.

12. Make your advice as specific as possible, and check that students are understanding what you’re saying.

13. Offer specific praise whenever you can. And offer lots of encouragement--writers need it!

14. Require follow-up conferences for the few students who need more individual attention from you.

15. Learn to make effective referrals to the Writing Center.

After a round of conferences is over, spend a small amount of class time talking about them--asking students what was helpful about the conferences, sharing some students’ effective ideas and strategies with the whole class, explaining what you’ve discovered many students need explained, reflecting on what you learned from the conferences, asking students for suggestions for improving the next round of conferences.

Instructor Dawn Biehler provides a timeline for preparing for conferencing, as well as advice for how to make the most of the conference time you have with students.

Dawn Biehler
Geography

Preparing for Effective One-on-One Conferencing

One-on-one conferencing yields the best results if you

- Prepare well so you can think on your feet during the conference.
- Convey a strong message to students about the strengths and weaknesses of their draft.
- Ask students questions to encourage critical thinking about their own writing.
- Think of this as a chance to learn about your students as human beings.
- Begin working on revisions together during the conference.

Planning and preparing for great writing conferences: A model timeline

When	What
Pre-semester	• Plan out when conferences will occur, factoring in time for grading.
First day of class	• Collect information about students on note cards or other medium. • Explain that you take writing seriously, that conferences are mandatory, and that feedback is an ongoing process. Perhaps mention "optional" conferences for assignments where conferences are not mandatory.
One week before due date	• Remind students that next week they will sign up for writing conferences—they should bring their calendars.
On the due date	• When setting up time slots, allow yourself some breathing room between conferences. • Pass around a sign-up list; instruct students how to prepare for conferences.
While grading	• Keep in mind that you cannot comment on everything; make sure the top two to three issues stand out clearly. • Note instances of strengths or problems by page number for easy reference.
Minutes before the conference	• Briefly review the student's note card, the draft, and your comments. • Be ready to talk about the top two to three issues in the paper.
The conference	• Establish rapport by greeting your students and asking questions. • Explain the agenda of the conference. • Ask the student about what aspects of the draft they like and which they want to change. • Return the draft while explaining your overall comments. • Allow the student to read your comments, and then allow them to ask questions. The whole rest of the conference may flow naturally from the student's own questions and concerns. • Coach your student to plan revision strategies, and begin implementing those strategies by working through a small piece of revision together. See page 4 for examples. • Ensure that students will take appropriate next steps. Make sure they write down ideas, strategies, and actual revisions. • End on a positive note, remind students not to throw away the draft, and encourage follow-up if appropriate.

John Bean offers specific suggestions for setting clear agendas and making the most of your time in conference.

SAVE TIME BY MAKING ONE-ON-ONE CONFERENCES AS EFFICIENT AS POSSIBLE

Distinguish Between Higher-Order and Lower-Order Concerns

Conferences are most productive if you concentrate first on the higher-order concerns of ideas, organization, development, and overall clarity as opposed to lower-order concerns of style, grammar, and mechanics. The lower-order concerns are lower not because they are unimportant but because they cannot be efficiently attended to until the higher-order concerns have been resolved. (There is little point to correcting the comma splices in a paragraph that needs to be completely reconceptualized.) Conferences should focus primarily on helping students create good, idea-rich arguments and wrestle them into a structure that works.

Start a Conference by Setting an Agenda with the Student

Conferences work best when students are encouraged to do most of the talking—rehearsing their papers' arguments while the teacher listen and coaches. Too often, though, conferences become dominated by teacher talk. Try to avoid the tendency to tell students what to say in their papers. Although you might picture an "ideal essay" in response to your assignment, very few students are going to produce what you yourself would write. Conferences should be primarily listening sessions where the instructor asks questions and the student does 80 to 90 percent of the talking. Most students have never experienced a teacher's actually being interested in their ideas. Engaging them in genuine conversation, showing real interest in their work, respecting their ideas—these are enormous favors to a novice writer. To establish a supportive listening tone at the beginning of a conference, the instructor can work with the student to set a mutual agenda.

Develop a Repertoire of Conferencing Strategies

After setting an agenda, you begin the actual conference. How you conduct the conference depends on where the student is in the writing process. Some students need help at the very highest levels—finding a thesis and a basic plan for an argument. Others might have a good overall plan but lots of confusing places along the way. In conducting a conference, you may wish to try one or more of the following strategies, tailored to each individual case:

If ideas are thin…

- Make an idea map to brainstorm for more ideas.
- Play devil's advocate to deepen and complicate the ideas.
- Help the writer add more examples, better details, more supporting data or arguments.

If the reader gets lost…

- Have the student talk through the ideas to clear up confusing spots.
- Help the student sharpen the thesis by seeing it as the writer's answer to a controversial or problematic question (get the student to articulate the question that the thesis "answers").
- Make an outline or a tree diagram to help with organization.
- Help the writer clarify the focus by asking questions about purpose:
  "My purpose in this paper is..."
  "My purpose in this section/paragraph is..."
  "Before reading my paper, the reader will have this view of my topic:...; after reading my paper, my reader will have this different view of my topic:..."
- Show the student where you get confused or "miscued" in reading the draft ("I started getting lost here because I couldn't see why you were giving me this information," or, "I thought you were going to say X, but then you said Y").
- Show the student how to write transitions between major sections or between paragraphs.

If you can understand the sentences but cannot see the point…

- Help the writer articulate meaning by asking "so what" questions: "I can understand what you are saying here, but I don't quite understand why you are saying it. I read all these facts, and I say, 'So what?' What do these facts have to do with your thesis?" (This helps the writer bring the point to the surface. You can then help the writer formulate topic sentences for paragraphs.)

Throughout the conference, try to make "readerly" rather than "writerly" comments—that is, describe your mental experience in trying to read the draft rather than telling the writer how to fix it. For example, say, "I had trouble seeing the point of this paragraph," rather than, "Begin with a topic sentence." This approach helps writers see that their purpose in revising is to make the reader's job easier rather than to follow "English teacher rules."

In conducting conferences, I like to have plenty of blank sheets of paper available; as the student talks, I jot down the student's ideas. At the end of the conference, I give the student my notes as a record of the conference.

Many instructors have found that student-teacher conferences become more productive when the student is as prepared for them as the teacher is. Here are two examples of handouts instructors have used to help students prepare for one on one conferences.

PREPARING FOR STUDENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Example #1

NAME:
APPOINTMENT DAY AND TIME:

Class is cancelled Monday, October 2, and Wednesday, October 4 in order to make time for one-on-one conferences. Your conference counts as class attendance. Bring your most recent revision of your current assignment with you. In addition, please come with written responses to the following questions.

What have you been working on so far in your writing?
What would you like to continue to work on?
What do you like about working in a workshop group?
What would you like the group to be doing that it isn't doing right now?
What kinds of topics (regarding writing) would you like to see discussed in class?

****

Example #2

Professor Steve Stern
Department of History
University of Wisconsin - Madison

History 574: "Sharing Exercise": for Presentation of Paper Themes and for Office Hour Discussions of Papers.

If I had to summarize the theme of my historical essay in no more than two or three sentences, I would state:

If I had to phrase my theme as a question for which I hope to develop an answer, my question would be:

Optional: If I had a hypothesis to share about items 1 & 2 above, the hypothesis would be:

The sources we have read (both primary and secondary) that are likely to be most useful for my paper are:

My biggest concern or anxiety about the paper is:

PLEASE FILL IN AND USE THIS AS A REFERENCE IN YOUR BRIEF PRESENTATIONS ON 10 NOV. AND IN YOUR OFFICE MEETINGS WITH ME ON YOUR PAPERS. THANKS.

If considered carefully, peer review can become a popular and useful writing activity for instructors and their students. Here, Kirsten Jamsen supplies some "best practices" for incorporating peer review into any course.

Kirsten Jamsen
Writing Across the Curriculum

MAKING PEER REVIEW WORK

After many semesters using peer review in my own composition classes and helping colleagues in Geography, Women's Studies, Political Science, Slavic, and Art use peer review successfully in their classes, I have several specific suggestions for instructors trying peer review for the first time or refining their own methods of using peer review.

1. Set realistic goals for peer review and explain them fully (and often) to students.

Before deciding to do peer review, it's essential that you consider your pedagogical reasons for using it. After my first unsuccessful attempt at peer review, I realized that I could not expect my students to respond to each others' papers as well as a trained instructor could. Rather than see peer review as a substitute for my comments, I now value peer review as a way to get students actively involved in their own learning. By having my students read their peers' writing and talk together about the processes of drafting and revising, I want to encourage them to become more self-conscious about their own writing process and to begin to take control over that process.

The primary reason that students struggle with peer review is that they don't understand what they are supposed to do and why they are doing it. If students don't understand the purposes of peer review, they will see it as mere busy work. *Before*, *during*, and *after* peer review sessions, take time to explain your goals for peer review. My main goal for peer review is to emphasize to students that writing is fundamentally a form of communication between real people. Talking face-to-face about a paper can help writers articulate what they are trying to say in their papers. It is also a chance for real readers to tell writers what they're hearing and what isn't coming across clearly.

Just as important, I stress to students that peer review teaches them to be critical readers. As they learn to read their peers' work with a "critical eye," they can begin to apply that "eye" to their own drafts. In addition, reviewers can give each other encouragement and share new ideas and new strategies for writing.

2. Do peer review more than once.

Being able to read and respond to papers effectively takes practice. If you plan to do peer review, I strongly recommend that you do it more than once. With practice, students will learn how to give each other constructive feedback, and additional peer reviews will reward the initial investment you put into preparing your students for the first one.

3. Guide your students with central questions and focused tasks.

To help our students learn how to do peer review, we need to clearly explain what we want them to do. Often peer review doesn't work because we give our students too many things to concern themselves with. Feeling uncertain about their ability to "teach" their peers anything about writing, peer reviewers will give up before they even begin. Giving students a few central questions or a brief set of guidelines will help them focus their responses to one another. I often ask reviewers to consider two central questions:
1. "What is the writer trying to say/argue for in this piece?"
2. "How can s/he make this argument more effective and persuasive?"

4. Help your students see the difference between revision and editing.

For most students, revising means editing. To prepare students for peer review, I lead a discussion on the differences between revision and editing, describing the large-scale changes they should suggest to one another: tightening up or shifting focus, clarifying purpose, cutting, adding, reorganizing, taking the conclusion as new introduction and starting over, etc. Until they've talked through large-scale issues, I outlaw discussion of grammar and mechanics, reminding students that it's a waste of time to polish a sentence that you later decide you don't need.

5. Encourage both honest responses and constructive advice.

I remind students to be "real readers" who tell the writer honestly what they are hearing as the main ideas, what they like, what confuses them, etc. To make the criticism constructive and positive, I outlaw "shoulding" on each other ("You should do this..."). Instead, I ask them to phrase their responses in "I" language ("I hear..., " "I'm confused when…," "I'd like to hear more about…," etc.).

6. Give students a clear format for peer review and require written reviews (either a worksheet or a letter to the writer).

In many Communications-B and writing-intensive courses, you probably won't have time for students to read drafts aloud in class. Instead, set a firm draft date to have groups exchange copies of drafts. Students then read the drafts and write reviews outside of class. To encourage students to take the reviewing process seriously, consider grading the reviews as a separate writing assignment. The following class period, have students discuss their reviews in small groups, making sure to give them clear guidelines on what you want them to discuss.

I write a procedure to follow on the board:

1) Divide time evenly between group members.

2) Writer of each piece presents main concerns (which may have changed after seeing other papers).

3) Each reader gives the writer an honest response to her/his piece, making sure to articulate what s/he thinks the writer's main idea is ("mirroring").

4) After writer's purpose or thesis is clear, move into open discussion of questions and suggestions for the writer.

5) Writer sums up suggestions and tells group her/his plan for next draft.

I remind students that they have different roles. The writer keeps the group focused on her/his concerns and leads the discussion. Readers are honest and constructive, using questions to help the writer talk through her/his ideas.

7. Observe group work and coach students on becoming better reviewers and writers.

By observing how your students work in their groups and intervening to encourage careful listening and questioning, you can coach them to become better reviewers and writers. I recommend "hovering" around the groups to keep them on task. If the students are doing peer review for the first time, they will probably finish early and need to be prodded to spend more time on each paper. They may also be "too nice," avoiding tough questions and honest responses. Talking afterwards about what the groups did well—sharing good written reviews and using a skilled group as a model—can help students improve as peer reviewers.

As teachers, we should remember that for the writer, often the very process of explaining his or her ideas to a peer group helps to clarify those ideas. In fact, research in composition studies has shown that such talk can help students to better develop their papers and better understand the genre in which they are writing.

To help your students succeed with peer review, it's vital that you clarify expectations and prepare students ahead of time to get the most out of the process.

Stephanie White
Writing Across the Curriculum

PREPARING STUDENTS IN ADVANCE FOR PEER REVIEW

It's important to take some time to talk about your expectations, methods, and beliefs about peer review before your first peer review of the semester. By preparing your students in advance for peer review, you'll help both writers and reviewers take ownership of the process and get the most out of the experience.

If you have 5 minutes…

Explain peer review to your students. Tell them why you believe it's important and useful. Emphasize how you want reviewers to be critical in a constructive way.

If you have 10 minutes…

Have a couple of students volunteer to tell the class about their experiences with peer review. Next, tell the class why you believe peer review is important and that you're asking them to be constructively critical. Highlight your students' positive experiences and offer solutions for avoiding the negative ones.

If you have 15 minutes or more…

After you explain peer review to your students, you have many options:

Discussion

Ask students about their past experiences with peer review and discuss the pros and cons of each experience.

Dos and Don'ts

Generate a list together of dos and don'ts for peer review. Have your students take the lead while you or a student writes down these ideas. Prepare a list of your own beforehand to add after your students are out of ideas (but don't be surprised if they've already covered them all!).

After class, type up the list, using your students' wording as much as possible to ensure their ownership of the concepts.

During the first peer review section and every subsequent one, distribute the list and remind students that these are their own ideas.

Practice Review (thinking ahead for another semester)

Distribute copies of a student's paper from a previous semester (with, of course, the student's permission), or use a sample you write yourself. As a class, do a peer review session of this paper. Afterwards, talk about what was useful and what wasn't. Generate a list, as above.

Peer Review Analysis (thinking ahead for another semester)

This semester, videotape some peer review sessions. Next semester, play excerpts from successful peer review sessions and discuss with students what was effective about these.

Professor David Sorkin not only asks students to focus their efforts on global writing concerns like argument, analysis, and clarity, but also gives them specific language for doing so.

Professor David Sorkin
History/Jewish Studies 529

GUIDELINES FOR IN-CLASS PEER REVIEW

Instructions: Please read this sheet carefully in order to know how you are to help your peers.

Bring three copies of your paper to class.

Each of you will read your paper aloud. Reading aloud is the best way to judge the clarity and coherence of a paper because it enables us to connect the written word with the spoken one. If an argument has broken off; if a sentence is unclear, wordy, inaccurate or pretentious; if there is a lack of evidence; or if there is a logical gap—all of these will be immediately obvious (to the writer as well as the reviewers). Reading aloud can be a humbling experience, there is no denying that, but it is also a fundamentally productive one.

Reviewers: Concentrate on your own response to the paper rather than rendering judgment. Use the first person (e.g., “I hear...”, “I didn’t understand...”, “I’m confused about...”, “I’d like to hear more about...”, “I couldn’t follow...”). Avoid using the second person (e.g., “you should”, “you need to”, “you ought to”). Responses are a clear guide because they enable the writer to rethink the issues on his/her own. Your responses (1st person) are easier to listen to and accept, and in thus in the end more effective, than your judgments (2nd person).

Process:

1. Hand a copy of your paper to each of your peer reviewers.
2. Read your paper aloud slowly; pause at the end of each paragraph to give yourself and your reviewers time to write comments.
3. When you are finished reading, discuss the paper candidly using 1st-person responses. Make sure the writer has time to write down the comments.
4. Reviewers: when you have finished discussing the paper, answer the “Peer Review Questions” and then hand the completed form, and your copy of the paper, to the writer.
5. Writer: when you hand in your paper
    a. please be sure to include the reviewer forms as well. Staple them to your paper.
    b. please write me a note describing what you found helpful/unhelpful in reading aloud and peer review and how you revised your paper in light of the process.

Peer Review Questions

Writer:

Reviewer:

1. Introduction. Is the first paragraph an adequate statement of the paper’s topic and approach? Did you know from the first paragraph where the paper was headed?

2. Continuity. Is the line of argument clear from paragraph to paragraph? Did each paragraph add to the argument?

3. Evidence. Did the writer support the argument in a convincing manner? Were quotations from the text well chosen?

4. Conclusion. Does the conclusion draw together the strands of the argument? Is it a sufficient statement of the paper’s main points?

5. Strengths. What did you find best in the paper?

In these activities, TA Noelle Crooks uses peer review to focus in on particular writing concerns: organization and clarity, conciseness, and the student's self-identified problem areas. The activities can be combined or used separately.

Noelle Crooks
Psychology

Activities for Focused Peer Review

In these materials, adapted from Psychology 225 with Professor Becky Addington, TA Noelle Crooks offers three peer review options that focus on different concerns in students' drafts: reverse outlining allows a reader to report on their understanding of the author's writing; the conciseness review enables the writer to focus in on the key writing concern of concision; and the "Author's Choice" review usefully requires writers to identify the weak areas of their papers – and to let their readers know where they want feedback.

These peer-review activities can be completed separately, at different times of the semester, or they can all be conducted at different times during the drafting process for one paper.

Activity 1: Reverse Outline

Author's Name _______________________ Reviewer's Name_______________________

Instructions: Clear ideas and clear connections between ideas are critical for a successful paper. As an author, the structure of your paper might be clear to you, but unclear to readers. This activity provides the opportunity to see what the reader is getting out of the paper and whether the key ideas are being communicated effectively.

Create a reverse outline of the paper's Introduction section. Begin by numbering the paragraphs. For each paragraph, write a one-sentence description of the main idea contained in that paragraph. Number each sentence according to the paragraph it's describing.

As you are outlining, be sure to note:

- Paragraphs where the main idea is unclear
- Places where the connections between paragraphs are unclear

Activity 2: Conciseness Review

Author's Name _______________________ Reviewer's Name_______________________

Instructions: Effective papers provide enough detail for the reader to understand what's going on without including extraneous information or words. In this activity, you will evaluate the overall conciseness of the paper. In addition to providing feedback on the draft itself, use the space below to provide a written response for each item.

1. Does the author provide all the essential details while maintaining economy of expression? Are there important details that are missing?

2. Are there sections or sentences that are redundant? Are sentences wordy?

3. What could be cut to make the paper more concise?

4. Are all page and word limits met?

Activity 3: Author's Choice

Author's Name _______________________ Reviewer's Name_______________________

Author Instructions*:* Circle TWO items from the list below that you would like your reviewer to focus on.

Reviewer Instructions*:* Review in detail the two selected items from the list below. In addition to providing feedback on the draft itself, use the space below to provide a written response for each item. If time allows, feel free to comment on additional sections of the paper.

1. *Introductory Paragraph*: Does it engage the reader? Does the author use dictionary definitions or 'since the beginning of time' statements? If so, what might be an alternative way to engage the reader

2. *Article 1 Review:* Does the overall review make sense? Does the author provide sufficient detail for you to understand the background experiments? Does the information flow well?

3. *Article 2 Review:* Does the overall review make sense? Does the author provide sufficient detail for you to understand the background experiments? Does the information flow well?

4. *Gap in the Literature:* Does the author explain why the current study was conducted? Does he/she talk about what's new about our study that earlier studies have not done? Why is this study important?

5. *Hypotheses:* Does the author lay out a specific prediction for each DV? Do the predictions compare all levels of the IV?

6. *Methods:* Would you be able to replicate the study given the details in the materials and procedures? Are materials described in sufficient detail? Can you follow the chronology of the experiment? Is there any important information that seems to be missing? Are there extraneous details that could be removed?

7. *Transitions:* Does each paragraph flow logically from the previous paragraph or do new paragraphs seem to come out of the blue?

8. *Overall Organization:* Can you easily follow the flow of the author's argument? Are there places where you get lost? Can you see where the argument is leading?

By completing this assignment, students familiarize themselves with grant writing and demonstrate their understanding of research studies and key concepts in a large Communication Arts course. After completing a draft, students participate in a peer review guided by specific criteria, as shown below.

Professor Sara McKinnon
Communication Arts 260

GRANT PROPOSAL ASSIGNMENT AND PEER REVIEW IN COMM. ARTS 260

Draft due Monday, March 5th, 12pm (noon). Peer review rubric due Wednesday, March 7th, 11:59pm.

Please use the hard copy of your peer review activity from the in-person writing workshop to complete this peer review rubric.

You may paraphrase your comments, but you must be accurate and honest. Please also honestly indicate how you incorporated your peer's comments into your final draft; is it **not required that you incorporate your peer's comments**, but you do need to explain why/why not.

You'll be using a peer review rubric on a 10 point scale. Full credit is subject to TA/instructor review, and any grade adjustments will be communicated to you by your TA.

The grant proposal prompt and requirements are listed below.

Imagine you are applying for funding for the research described in the scholarly article you've read for this assignment by Braithwaite & Baxter (2006) entitled "'You're My Parent but You're Not': Dialectical Tensions in Stepchildren's Perceptions About Communicating with the Nonresidential Parent." You will need to convince the funder, Foundation for Improved Human Communication (FIHC), that your research is 1) necessary, 2) important, 3) aligned with their funding priorities, and 4) able to achieve meaningful results.

Typically, grant proposals are written for funding for future research, although past studies are used to justify this future work. For the sake of this assignment, <u>we will imagine that the study has not yet occurred</u>. We will also only focus on the proposal narrative (most proposals also include a budget section).

The goal of this assignment is to demonstrate your comprehension of communication research studies and ability to explain them clearly, and persuasively, to others. You will also become familiar with a common form of writing in the non-profit and public sectors: grant writing.

You will turn in a draft of this press release on March 5 by 12pm NOON.

On March 5 or 6th, you will have a writing workshop where you will get peer and TA feedback and assistance with strengthening your thesis statement and overall argument. **You will complete your Peer Review Rubric by March 7th at 11:59pm. You will then turn in your final version by March 9th at 11:59pm.**

As in most grant proposals, each question in the form will contain a character count limit. You should strive to be accurate, concise, and persuasive in your answers to these questions. To ensure you are maximizing your character counts, there is also a minimum character requirement for each question. Include your character count at the end of each section of your proposal.

The questions are as follows:

1. Primary Research Questions: What are the key questions this research addresses? (250-500 characters)
2. Background and Rationale: Why is this study necessary? What research does it build upon, and how? (1,000-1,500 characters)
3. Foundation Priorities: How does this study align with FIHC's current funding priorities (listed below)? (1,000-1,500 characters)
4. Proposed Research Activities: Describe the study's research methods (and participants, if applicable). (1,000-1,500 characters)
5. Study Outcomes: What kind of data and/or outcomes will the study produce? Be specific. (250-1000 characters)
6. Study Implications: What are the potential social impacts of this research? How will it improve our knowledge of human communication and behavior? (1,000-1,500 characters)

Foundation for Improved Human Communication's (FIHC) 2017-2018 Priorities
FIHC is interested in funding scholarly research that improves public understanding of human communication and behavior. For the 2017-2018 cycle, we are particularly interested in research that:

- improves our collective understanding of the functions of communication.
- explains how we address social problems via communicative engagement.
- encourages the building of effective communities.

In the previous grant cycle, we funded $52 million in communication research. The following is a sample of the studies we supported:
$60,000 - University of Minnesota - for research exploring civic deliberation in rural communities
$60,000 - Drury University - to support a rhetorical analysis of community responses to political campaign ads in Missouri
$80,000 - University of New Mexico - for a study of deception theory in extended families
$100,000 - Beloit College - for a pilot project testing athletes' responses to negative media framing

Peer Review Rubric: Grant Proposal

Criteria	Ratings	Pts
Your partner's proposal: Primary research questions *Does the first section clearly outline key research questions? Do these questions effectively convey what the research addresses?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's proposal: Background and rationale *Can you underline the author's rationale for this study and background on why it is necessary? Is this rationale clear and explicit? Does the rationale explain how this research builds upon existing research?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's proposal: Foundation priorities and research activities *Does the author describe how the study aligns with FIHC's funding priorities? Does the author describe the study's research methods? Are these explanations clear and appropriate?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's proposal: Study outcomes *Does the author describe what data and/or outcomes are expected? Do these outcomes make sense and/or what you might expected?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's proposal: Continuity *Do the key research questions and the body of the grant proposal match and/or make sense together? Does the grant proposal flow as a piece of writing: do the separate sections hang together?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's proposal: Strengths *What two things did you find best in the proposal?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's proposal: Improvements *What are two things that you suggest for improvement?*		1.0 pts
Your own proposal: How you will incorporate your reviewer's feedback *This question relates to how you plan to modify your draft based on feedback: Please describe how you will take your peer reviewer's comments into consideration for your final version.*		3.0 pts
Your name *Please type your name!*		0.0 pts
Total Points: 10.0		

Professor Sara McKinnon asks students to take on the role of a freelance journalist and utilize insights from scholarly research assigned in the class to compose a human interest story. After completing a draft, students participate in a peer review guided by specific criteria, as shown below.

Professor Sara McKinnon
Communication Arts 260

HUMAN INTEREST STORY AND PEER REVIEW IN COMM. ARTS 260

Draft due Monday, March 19th, 12pm (noon). Peer review rubric due Wednesday, March 21st, 11:59pm.

Please use the hard copy of your peer review activity from the in-person writing workshop to complete this peer review rubric.

You may paraphrase your comments, but you must be accurate and honest. Please also honestly indicate how you incorporated your peer's comments into your final draft; is it ***not required that you incorporate your peer's comments****, but you do need to explain why/why not.*

You'll be using a peer review rubric on a 10 point scale. Full credit is subject to TA/instructor review, and any grade adjustments will be communicated to you by your TA.

The human interest story prompt and requirements are listed below.

Imagine you are a freelance journalist who is trying to develop a publishable story about the challenges and dangers of jobs that involve *emotion labor*. You are basing your story off of Tracy's (2005) article entitled "Locking up emotion: Moving beyond dissonance for understanding emotion labor discomfort." Though Tracy's research focuses on the challenges of emotion management for correctional officers, your task is to extend understanding of this concept to a wide range of jobs where emotion is a key aspect of the work, and develop a human connection or angle to the concept.

The purpose of a human-interest story is to share unique insights into the human experience. People should be at the heart of such stories, but they should also seek to inform, raise awareness, educate, and give people new language or analysis for common human experiences.

The story should be composed of the following parts:

- A catchy **headline:** This is your title.
- An engaging **lead**: This is where you get your reader hooked into the article (1-2 paragraphs)
- The **body** of your story: This is where you develop the main content and key information that expands upon, and develops, what you begin in your lead. You can think of it as the hub, or as the "nuts and bolts" of the story (3-5 paragraphs).
- A satisfying **conclusion**: Your conclusion should summarize and tie up any necessary loose ends (questions asked in the article), and it should leave your readers with a lasting thought to ponder (1-2 paragraphs).

You should feel free to draw from other research on the theme of emotion labor if it helps you in composing your own story. You should also feel free to draw from personal experience or the experience of others in order to develop the human angle. Toward this end, interviews with friends, family, or acquaintances may be useful to personalize the article.

Your final paper should be between 500-800 words (not including bibliography), and include a bibliography with properly formatted sources in APA (including the Tracy reading that you are required to cite). Include word count in parentheses at the end of the article.

Peer Review Rubric: Grant Proposal

Criteria	Ratings	Pts
Your partner's draft: Human interest *Does the author tell a compelling story that emphasizes human interest? Is there a personal angle or are other people's stories incorporated?*		2.0 pts
Your partner's draft: Incorporating research *Does the author incorporate Tracy's and (optional) other researchers' studies effectively?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's draft: Creativity *Are the headline and the lead sufficiently creative? Does this story seem unique – different enough from the one Tracy is crafting?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's draft: Format *Does this read like a publishable newspaper or website article? What could your author do to make it more realistic?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's proposal: Strengths *What two things did you find best in the proposal?*		1.0 pts
Your partner's proposal: Improvements *What are two things that you suggest for improvement?*		1.0 pts
Your own proposal: How you will incorporate your reviewer's feedback *This question relates to how you plan to modify your draft based on feedback: Please describe how you will take your peer reviewer's comments into consideration for your final version.*		3.0 pts
Your name *Please type your name!*		0.0 pts
Total Points: 10.0		

Professor Prashant Sharma requires students in Zoology 957 (Topics in the Evolutionary Developmental Biology of Animals) to complete three writing assignments: a research paper, a peer review, and a revision and rebuttal. He also provides clear evaluation criteria for each assignment, which reflect his expectations.

Professor Prashant Sharma
Integrative Biology

ZOOLOGY 957 WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND PEER REVIEW

1. Research paper. An important goal of this course is to teach you to examine and evaluate current literature on evo-devo critically. As a starting point, you will assume the role of an author and write a minimum 5 page (1-1.5 line spacing) research paper. Your paper will consist of one of the following:

(1) Design a research proposal to test a hypothesis (a "what-should-be-done-next" paper).
or
(2) Review a major theme in animal evo-devo, where you take a stand on a particular issue.

also acceptable (and highly encouraged):
(3) Develop a thesis chapter, manuscript, or preliminary/qualifying exam proposal (if your research pertains to evolution, development, or both).

Regardless of your topic, your writing assignment will include at least one figure of your own design. Your figure can serve various purposes, such as illustrating current understanding of a topic or depicting the design of hypothetical experiments.

Due dates:
Declare topics, 20 October 2017
First draft: 10 November 2017

2. Peer review. Another aim of this course is to introduce you to the peer review process and/or refine your capabilities as a peer reviewer. You will exchange your draft with another graduate student. As a peer reviewer, you will write a maximum 2 page (1-1.5 line spacing) critique of your peer's research paper, focusing on major issues and providing constructive feedback for improving the draft. The exercise is double blinded.

Due dates: Peer review, 17 November 2017

3. Revision and rebuttal. After reading over the review of your paper, you will prepare two items for submission:

(1) The final draft of your paper.
and
(2) A Responses to Reviewers document. This document (maximum 2 page, 1-1.5 line spacing) should be formatted as a letter to the Editor, providing a point-by-point explanation of how reviewer comments were addressed, incorporated, and/or rebutted. Rebuttals should be substantiated by reasoned arguments and/or references to the literature.

Due dates:
Final draft, 8 December 2017
Responses to reviewers, 8 December 2017

Evaluations of writing assignments

Writing assignments will be evaluated according to the six criteria. For each criterion, the assignment will be scored from 1 to 3, with 3 being the highest score. Criteria and explanations of the scores follow.

Clarity. Is the writing sufficiently clear to convey its meaning to a general reader? Are concepts and hypotheses well explained?

Rank 1. Written ideas are not clearly conveyed in multiple sections; abbreviations are not explained; either overly technical *or* insufficiently precise writing

Rank 2. Written ideas are conveyed well, with few unclear aspects; reviewers will understand the broad meaning of the work, but will be left with some requests for clarification.

Rank 3. Consummately clear writing that is interpretable by non-expert reviewers; complex concepts are methodically deconstructed; results and/or proposed experiments are immediately lucid

Organization. Does the writing demonstrate a solid logical structure? For a research paper, are sections clearly delimited for (a) abstract, (b) background, (c) methods, (d) results, and (e) discussion? For a research proposal, are sections clearly delimited for (a) objectives, (b) rationale and significance, (c) hypotheses, and (d) research approach?

Rank 1. Writing bears structural deficiencies; thoughts are incorrectly grouped in inappropriate sections of the paper; one or more sections are missing or highly underdeveloped.

Rank 2. All sections are present and adequately developed; some ideas appear in unorthodox order that diminishes the cogency of the work, but these comprise a handful of exceptions.

Rank 3. Every section is strongly developed; all higher concepts or hypotheses appear in a logical order, with downstream analyses/proposed experiments supporting the broader theme.

Use of literature. Are postulates appropriately supported by literature citations? Do citations follow a consistent format? Are all key studies germane to the topic included in the references list?

<u>Rank 1</u>. Writing is missing key references *or* incorrectly summarizes cited works; multiple postulates lacking citations; inconsistent citation format mixes footnotes and endnotes, to adverse effect.

<u>Rank 2</u>. Most of the relevant literature is appropriately cited; only a handful of missing references limits the completeness of the literature review.

<u>Rank 3</u>. Writing demonstrates masterful command of the literature; all citations follow a consistent format.

Cohesion. Is the entire work connected by a unifying set of ideas? Does the discussion/research approach address the original hypotheses?

<u>Rank 1</u>. Ideas are disconnected or fragmented across the paper; the end of the work does not connect with its premise; various ideas critical to the theme/purpose of the work end abruptly and are left incomplete.

<u>Rank 2</u>. Writing is broadly connective, but contains some loose ends; some ideas are extraneous to the theme/purpose of the work, but this could be remedied by their deletion.

<u>Rank 3</u>. A seamless work interconnected by its central ideas/theme/purpose; writing is focused and on target at all times.

Conciseness and orthography. Are space limits used effectively for each section? Does word choice and use of the discipline’s terminology serve to reduce wordiness and parenthetical explanations?

<u>Rank 1</u>. Writing is very much under length, with allotted space not used to fullest extent *or* Writing is wordy and substitutes detail and summary spams for original analysis and contributions; various spelling and formatting errors that would outright disqualify the work from a journal or grant cycle submission.

<u>Rank 2</u>. Writing is generally concise, but suffers from occasional word choice and orthography issues; a few terminological errors are present.

<u>Rank 3</u>. Flawless writing demonstrates mastery of the discipline’s terminology and standards; orthography and syntax are unquestionable; page limits and space are used to their fullest extent.

Illustration. Does the figure clearly convey the ideas intended by its author? Is the figure interpretable by non-specialists of the discipline? Does the figure legend address all the components of what is shown?

<u>Rank 1</u>. Illustration is unclear or incorrectly tied to the writing; no figure legend present.

<u>Rank 2</u>. Illustration is present, but requires some work to interpret; figure legend by itself is insufficient to understand the illustration.

<u>Rank 3</u>. A self-explanatory image that both supports the writing’s purpose and serves to make the writing more concise; legend is complete and detailed.

Evaluations of peer reviews

Peer reviews are graded according to two criteria. For each criterion, the assignment will be scored from 1 to 3, with 3 being the highest score. Criteria and explanations of the scores follow.

Critical thinking. Does the review assess all key elements of the work? Does the review provide a rigorous test of the written ideas?

Rank 1. Review is superficial *or* Review focuses exclusively on trivial elements of the writing (e.g., orthography; syntax; illustration color choice); most elements of the work are not assessed or are given the benefit of the doubt; reviewer incorrectly evaluates some of the work's logical bridges or procedures.

Rank 2. Review assesses some sections, but leaves one or more sections of the paper unassessed; reviewer tests some ideas.

Rank 3. Review rigorously examines each element of the paper; scrutiny of the review provides some new perspective and/or ideas to the author.

Constructive criticism. Is the reviewer fair? Does the reviewer offer solutions to conceptual problems that s/he raises?

Rank 1. Reviewer is unduly critical in an unhelpful way; criticisms imposed by the reviewer have no reasonable solution or are irrelevant.

Rank 2. Reviewer is generally fair, but occasionally strays into unhelpful criticism (e.g., writing style or subjective comments).

Rank 3. Reviewer is professional, balanced, considerate, and helpful in all criticisms; reviewer provides potential solutions to their concerns that the author can explore in their revision.

Evaluations of responses to reviewers

Responses to reviewers are graded according to two criteria. For each criterion, the assignment will be scored from 1 to 3, with 3 being the highest score. Criteria and explanations of the scores follow.

Rebuttals. In cases where the author did not accept recommendations of the reviewers, are rebuttals to the reviewer effective and on target? Is the rebuttal convincing?

Rank 1. Rebuttals are ineffective or unwarranted; rebuttals are excuses, not justified reasons for retaining the status quo; arguments take on a personal or offended tone.

Rank 2. Rebuttals are generally effective; a handful of arguments are unwarranted and could have been better addressed through revision.

Rank 3. Rebuttals have the cogency of a practiced career diplomat; arguments are professionally delivered and wholly convincing.

Revisions. In cases where the author accepted recommendations of the reviewers, do the changes made by the author address the criticism effectively?

Rank 1. Revisions are superficial or miss the point of the reviewer's recommendation; original criticism still applies post-revision.

Rank 2. Revisions are somewhat effective; reviewer's recommendations are mostly met.

Rank 3. Revisions are seamlessly integrated into the original draft, whereby the final draft is considerably improved.

With this peer review feedback form, Professor Karla Ausderau helps students better understand the systematic literature review as a genre. She provides guiding questions for students to consider as they review their peers' drafts.

Professor Karla Ausderau
Scientific Inquiry in Occupational Therapy I: Evidence-Based Practice
(Occupational Therapy 671)

A PEER REVIEW FEEDBACK FORM IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY 671

Reviewer's Name: Date:

Author's Name:

PEER REVIEW FORM

1. State PICO Question.

2. Provide 2-3 specific strengths of the draft of their systematic review.

3. Provide 2-3 areas that need improvement in the draft of their systematic review and if relevant potential ways to improve.

4. Organization
   a) Were the basic sections of the paper included? If not, what is missing?
   b) Where strong topic sentences used in each paragraph?
   c) Did they use subheadings appropriately to clarify the sections of the text and organize material? If not, recommendations for change.
   d) Was the material ordered in a way that was logical, clear, easy to follow? If not, recommendations for change.

5. APA Format, Citations, Grammar, and Style
   a) Did they cite sources appropriately? Where there places where they missed citations and where? Did they over cite any articles (meaning they used a citation too frequently)?
   b) Where there any consistent grammar or spelling errors that need to be addressed?
   c) Was the sentence structure clear? Did the paragraphs have a topic sentence? Did the paragraphs flow together in the varying sections?

6. Background Literature
   a) Does the background describe what is currently known about the problem, and what is not yet known?
   b) Provide relevant definitions and descriptions of the intervention and approach, as needed.
   c) Discuss how this systematic review will contribute to our understanding or resolution of the problem addressed.
   d) Does the information flow in a logical argument?
   e) Was the relevance to occupation and participation presented

7. Is the PICO Question/objective of the systematic review clearly stated at the end of the background literature and before the methods section?

8. Methods.
   a) Would you be able to replicate their search with the information they provided in their methods section? If not, what is missing? (for example key words, data bases searched, inclusion, exclusion criteria, limits used, process, etc.)

9. Results
   a) Do they provide the numbers of studies screened, assessed for eligibility, and included in the review? Is their flow diagram included?
   b) Do they provide the necessary details of the studies they included?
   c) Have they organized their results logically and effectively?
   d) Have they identified if the level of evidence for the different themes was strong, etc.?
   e) Is their Evidence Table complete, concise, and clear?

10. Discussion, Limitations, Relevance to OT, and Conclusion
    a) Do they summarize the main findings, including the strength of evidence, relevance, etc?
    b) Do they provide interpretation of the results? Point out interesting findings, discrepancies?
    c) Do they situate the findings in other relevant literature?
    d) Are appropriate limitations identified?
    e) Have they answered their PICO questions with evidence from the literature?

In this course for first-year PharmD students, Professors Beth Martin and Andrea Porter use a detailed peer review process for a portfolio assignment, in which students document changes in a community member's health over time and provide continuity of care for that individual. This instructional sheet guides students in the peer review process.

Professor Beth Martin
Professor Andrea Porter
School of Pharmacy
Pharmacy Practice Experiences I & II (PHM PRAC 425 & 426)

POPs Portfolio Peer Review

Start at the 426 Canvas site:

1. Scroll down to the "Partner Portfolio Tools and Examples" section.
2. Review the "POPs Portfolio Guidesheet" and the "ISMP Error-Prone Abbreviations List" to note what aspects of the portfolio to pay particular attention to during your review.
3. Click the "Google Apps link for Partner Portfolio" link.
4. Click the gray bar that says "Google Apps link for Partner Portfolio." *Note: you need to be logged out of all other Google accounts for this to be successful.*
5. Click on the "Shared with me" tab (picture below)

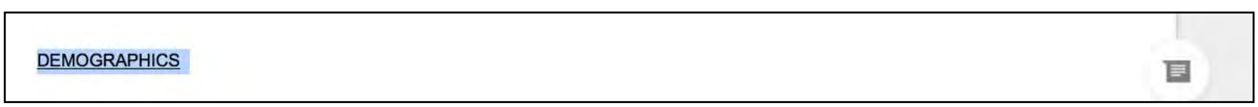
6. Double click on your assigned peer group's portfolio named "POPs Portfolio 16-17 (peer group #)"

For each section of your peer group's POPs Portfolio:

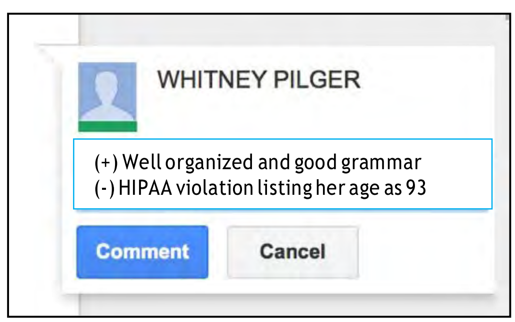
1. Read through ALL of the content, including any team member's comments already posted.
2. Once you have read the content, take a moment and reflect on what was written. What is your initial reaction to what you just read? What did you like about the documentation, and what do you think could be improved upon?

To add comments to your peer group's POPs Portfolio:

1. Highlight the portfolio section header. (Ex: Demographics, Medications and Health History, etc Please do NOT highlight a whole paragraph or section – JUST the header)
2. After highlighting the <u>section header</u>, an "add comment" bubble (shown below) appears to the right of the document.



3. Click the bubble to add a comment.



4. Type comment, and click “Comment” when finished.
   The format you should use for your comment/feedback is:
   (+) [*Write a positive attribute for the section]*
   (-) [*Describe one area for improvement]*

Here is an example post for a Medication and Health History Section comment
(+) This section is well organized as it is laid out. All the information is easy to locate, including the partner’s immunizations and blood pressure/heart rate measurements.
(-) Double check error prone abbreviations such as the hanging decimal for digoxin .125 mg (should be digoxin 0.125 mg)

5. **REMEMBER: Each group member must post his/her own, original comment for EACH section of your peer group’s portfolio. Note one positive aspect of the section and one area to improve in the section.**

Writing in Service Learning and Community-Based Learning

Beth Godbee explains how well-designed writing assignments and writing-intensive courses can enhance a service-learning experience.

Beth Godbee
Writing Across the Curriculum

SERVICE LEARNING: WRITING ACROSS COMMUNITIES

Interest in community engagement and service learning can be seen across UW-Madison—in student volunteerism, literacy tutoring, and service learning. This community-oriented trend reflects a national interest in what's been called "Writing Across Communities," which conveniently shares an acronym with Writing Across the Curriculum, WAC.

Writing across communities encourages us to expand our writing assignments to include the following:

- reflection journals, position papers, and editorials
- multimedia presentations and video productions
- publicity campaigns, including brochures and flyers
- other written documents designed in consultation with community members and organizations.

Because they often are written for a public audience and for public use, these assignments promote ongoing revision and can deepen students' investment in course material. Patricia Loew from Life Sciences Communication explains:

"Students tend to be really motivated to do a good job. They are emotionally and intellectually invested in their projects. In 16 weeks, they learn to work in a team through a simulation that parallels what they'll do beyond school when working with clients. Students learn equal parts people skills, computer skills, and storytelling skills."

At the same time, Randy Stoecker from Rural Sociology reminds us that "serving students and serving the community" may conflict when (1) what the community needs is not students, but already-skilled production specialists or (2) what students want is more time reflecting on service experiences than negotiating final products with community partners. Many instructors address these challenges by developing long-term relationships with community partners and by giving multiple writing assignments.

The Relationship Between Service Learning and Writing-Intensive Instruction

Drawing on the work of compositionists Paul Heilker and Thomas Deans, David Jolliffe* argues that service learning is well suited for writing across the curriculum because both writing and service learning

- help students effectively learn and understand the importance of course content
- inspire pedagogical and curricular innovation
- encourage students to challenge and extend their existing perspectives, as well as try on new ones
- allow students to connect in-class learning with out-of-class experiences
- support cross-disciplinary teaching and learning
- give students practice writing in a range of genres, including journal entries, analytic essays, academic research papers, position papers, and working documents for non-profit organizations.

So writing paired with service learning has the potential for encouraging—even motivating—students to become active and engaged learners in our courses.

To find out more about the role of writing in service learning, see:

Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning: www.umich.edu/~mjcsl/
Community Literacy Journal: www.communityliteracy.org/
Reflections Journal: www.reflectionsjournal.net/

To learn more about support at UW-Madison for service learning, contact the following programs:

The Morgridge Center for Public Service
Interim Director: Lisa Chambers (lisa.chambers@wisc.edu)
Assistant to the Director: Nancie Luther (nancie.luther@wisc.edu)

The Morgridge Center support faculty, instructional staff, and TAs in the development of service-learning courses through consultations, grants, and a resource library.

*"Writing Across the Curriculum and Service Learning: Kairos, Genre, and Collaboration." *WAC for the New Millennium*. Eds. Susan H. McLeod, Eric Miraglia, Margot Soven, and Christopher Thaiss. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2001.

The writing assignments in this course, which include journals, an argument paper, a citizenship autobiography, and a budget assignment, are sequenced to help students synthesize their in- and out-of-class experiences with citizenship.

Professor Kathy Cramer
Political Science 425

Service Learning in Political Science

Political Science 425: Citizenship, Democracy, and Difference

Office Hours: Thursdays 12-2pm and by appointment
Mailbox: In the lounge across the hall from 110 North Hall. (Enter the door closest to the Lincoln statue. The lounge will be on your right. Once you enter that room, faculty mailboxes are to the left.)

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE
Welcome to "Citizenship, Democracy, and Difference"! This course is designed to cause you, and all of us collectively, to reflect on what it means to be a citizen in the contemporary United States. It is a "service-learning" course, which means that you will be volunteering each week with a community organization as a way to gain a deeper understanding of civic engagement and your role as a citizen. This is a highly demanding and also highly rewarding course. The course demands a consistent commitment to a local organization, a good deal of writing, a modest reading load, and consistent and active class participation.

Specifically, this course is intended to:

- Broaden your understanding of your role as a citizen and your personal sense of civic responsibility.
- Develop your ability to engage in collective decision making with people of a variety of backgrounds.
- Increase your awareness of the work that community-based organizations do in a democracy.
- Deepen your understanding of civic engagement and its role in democracies.

Field service
This course will require you to choose a community-based organization from a list of organizations that I provide. You will volunteer with that organization for a minimum of four hours per week (for the last 13 weeks of the semester), 52 hours total for the semester. The organizations that are partnering with this course include *Asian Wisconzine*, the Bayview Community Center, the Grassroots Leadership College, Kennedy Heights Community Center, Lussier Community Education Center, Vera Court Neighborhood Center, and the Wisconsin Women's Network. Within the first week of class, I will match you up with one of these organizations, based on your preferences. Shortly thereafter, you will co-sign a Community Involvement Agreement that will represent your commitment to work with this organization consistently throughout the course. Your field service is an integral component of this learning experience. We will use it in a variety of ways: it will form the basis for much of your journal writing, for our class discussions, and for your two major writing assignments. It will also count for part of your grade, based on assessments by your supervisor at the organization you are working with.

Writing-intensive course
This course is designated as a Writing-intensive course. You will be required to write two papers for this course, as well as maintain a journal for the duration of the semester. We are very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with Writing Fellows in developing your two major papers. You will find details of these assignments below.

Course readings
Readings posted in the course outline below are available for purchase as a coursepack at Bob's Copy Shop at 616 University between Lake and Frances St. (257-4536). (This is the Bob's Copy Shop on the east end of campus, not the one near Union South.) You will need to prepay for the pack in person, and then pick it up a day or so later. This is also on reserve as a coursepack at College Library.

Class participation
This class is a seminar, which means class sessions will mainly consist of discussion. Class participation counts. You should come to class prepared to discuss the readings (this means having read and thought about the readings) as well as your service experiences. Keeping a journal will help you prepare for these discussions, which I expect will be lively and rewarding experiences for each of us.

We will take turns leading class discussion. On most days, I will give brief lectures and run discussion for the first half of class, then one of you will lead us in discussion for the second half of class. During the second week of class, you will sign up for the class session that you would like to lead.

SERVICE-LEARNING FELLOW

We are very fortunate to have been granted a Service-Learning Fellow for this course, Ryan Miller. Ryan is an undergraduate History and Poli Sci major who works with the Morgridge Center for Public Service on campus. He will serve as a liaison between our course and the organizations we are working with and will assist the class in various other ways throughout the term.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

One of the writing assignments for this class will be a journal that you keep throughout the semester. Your journal entries will form the basis for our class discussions and for your two paper assignments. Plan to write at least three times a week (about one single-spaced page per entry) as soon after each session at your organization as possible. Your entries should consist of three types, in roughly equal proportions: 1) reflections on the readings, 2) observations from or reflections on your field experiences, and 3) analysis of the way the readings relate to your field experiences and vice versa. For each entry, you should record the date and which type of reflection it is (reading, field service, or integration of the two). **For the first two times that you work with your organization, your journal entries related to your field service should be mainly observation.** Focus on describing what you see and hear. Try to resist making value judgments, or reflecting on what you see. What do people in that setting do? Who is in the setting? What does it look like? Where is it located? What activities are you assigned to do? What surprises you? I want you to get down as many details as possible. These entries will serve as a bench mark for you to reflect upon later in the semester, especially when writing your term papers.

All of your entries should be typed. I will occasionally give you specific questions to think about as you write, but you are encouraged to think ahead to the paper assignments. You are free to reflect on any aspect of the course material or experience that you encounter while volunteering at your organization. Feel free to include newspaper articles, photographs, flyers, or other material relevant to your organization, and to be creative. I do not expect these journal entries to be polished essays, but I do not want them to be purely stream-of-consciousness writing either. Writing in your journal will be most valuable if you use it consistently to record, reflect upon and analyze specific issues and experiences. You will hand in your journal three times during the semester; I will return it with comments.

I will grade the journals as follows:

A: **more than** three journal entries (of roughly one page in length each) per week, good balance between reflecting on the readings, reflecting on field experiences, and excellent integration of the two

AB: **more than** three journal entries (of roughly one page in length each) per week, adequate balance between reflecting on readings, field experiences, room for improvement with respect to integrating field experience with readings

B: two to three journal entries per week (of roughly one page in length each) per week, adequate balance between reflecting on readings, field experiences, room for improvement with respect to integrating field experience with readings

C: one to two journal entries per week, adequate balance between reflecting on readings, field experiences, room for improvement with respect to integrating field experience with readings

D: one to two journal entries per week, lack of balance between reflecting on readings, field experiences, room for improvement with respect to integrating field experience with readings

First paper assignment

The first paper assignment is to craft an argument in response to the following question: How is the work that people are doing in your organization related to politics? You could answer this in a wide variety of ways. Allow yourself to be creative in how you choose to do so.

Here are some possible themes you might pursue to write this paper:

- Where does the organization get its funding? What levels of government provide funding and what do the employees and volunteers at this organization have to do to secure this funding?
- What are the public problems that the organization is trying to address? Would they be better addressed through new legislation? Through government providing services the organization currently provides? Why or why not?
- How does participating in the programs the organization provides affect how the clients of the organization view themselves as citizens? How does it affect how they view their relationship to government and public officials? Does it increase or decrease the likelihood that people will participate in politics in the future?

To write this paper, you should draw upon what you have learned from our course readings and class sessions, as well as the observations and reflections you record in your journals. That is, I want you to reference class readings as well as your experience in your service work. It is acceptable—in fact, recommended—that you explicitly talk about your own personal observations of your organization in your paper. Aim for informed observations rather than mere anecdotes. You can write in the first person. In addition, you should actively gather information from your organization by doing such things as attending staff or board meetings and interviewing members of the administrative staff and clients of the organization. It may also be useful for you to do research on the background of the organization through searching the archives of local papers online or through the Lexis/Nexis database available through the UW Library homepage. I also strongly encourage you to do additional background research on topics related to your argument, such as research on the public problem that your organization is facing.

The paper should be 9-11 pages in length of double-spaced, 10 or 12 point type, using reasonable margins. The pages should be numbered and stapled. You may use any standard form of citation. Whichever style you choose (e.g., APA, Chicago), you should use both in-text parenthetical references as well as a reference list. For a useful guide on proper methods of citing sources, see the UW Writing Center web page "FAQs About Documenting Sources" (http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Documentation.html).

Second paper assignment
For the second paper, you will write a citizenship autobiography. The question you will address is, What does it mean to me to be a good citizen? You are to revisit your first journal entry in which you described what it means to be a good citizen (see this assignment under the first day of class in the Calendar below), and then in detail explain how your understanding of citizenship has changed (or not) across the course of the semester in response to your service activity, the assigned readings, our class sessions, and your journal work. I want you to aim for a clear conception of citizenship—do not just state that conceptions of citizenship vary widely and that the proper definition depends on the individual. This paper is your chance to clarify what good citizenship means TO YOU. To formulate your argument, think about these questions: How has this class changed you, if at all? How do you view your role as a citizen? What does service learning mean for your understanding of democratic citizenship? How have the experiences of this semester helped you to understand what citizenship means today? This paper should also be 9-11 pages in length of double-spaced, 10 or 12 point type, using reasonable margins, stapled with pages numbered.

Writing Fellows
We are very fortunate to have the assistance of two writing tutors, called Writing Fellows, assigned to our course this semester. These Writing Fellows are upper-division undergraduates who have been trained by UW Writing Center faculty to critically evaluate and respond helpfully to their peers' writing. They will work with me to assist you in developing writing skills commensurate with your critical thinking abilities. I have chosen to work with Writing Fellows because I believe in the philosophy behind this program: "All writers, no matter how accomplished, can improve their writing by sharing works in progress and making revisions based on constructive criticism."

Writing Fellows are

- Undergraduate students who will read your writing and make constructive suggestions for revision
- Trained in how to critically evaluate and respond helpfully
- Supervised closely by me

Writing Fellows do <u>not</u>

- Grade your papers
- Teach you course-specific content

The Writing Fellows will work with you on both paper assignments. You will see in the following course schedule that these papers are to be submitted to me in complete, polished form fully two weeks before they are due in final form. I will pass this paper on to your Writing Fellow who will carefully read your paper, make comments on your draft, and then meet with you individually for a conference to discuss your writing and suggestions for revision. You will then revise your paper and submit both the original draft and your revised version on the specified revision date, along with the Writing Fellow's comments and a cover letter explaining how you responded to each of your Writing Fellow's comments.

Note that participation in the Writing Fellows component of this course is not optional. Also, all due dates are inflexible. You must turn in your papers by the deadlines indicated on this syllabus. Failure to participate in the Writing Fellows process will reflect directly and negatively on your paper grades. Each initial submission is to be written with the sort of clarity and completeness that you would normally associate with a final version. Your best effort on this will allow the Writing Fellows to provide you with a constructive critique and that, in turn, should enable you to engage in a more self confident and satisfying revision. They will not assign a grade to your paper; I will grade the final submissions after you have met with the Writing Fellow assigned to you to review his or her written comments and have proceeded with the revisions. All students in this course receive "Writing Intensive" credit.

In all of your written work, be sure not to plagiarize. Plagiarism is <u>not just</u> turning in another person's paper, copying a paper from the Internet, or buying it from a term paper clearinghouse. People also plagiarize when they cut and paste a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or other portion from another source without putting that portion in quotation marks and citing it. Anytime a person uses someone else's work—even if it is just a phrase—without attributing that work to the original source, that is plagiarism. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, please see the UW Academic Misconduct Guide (http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html), consult the UW Writing Center (http://writing.wisc.edu) and/or ask me for help. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense, punishable by suspension or expulsion from the university.

Service-learning budget assignment

This assignment is intended to synthesize your familiarity with the organization you have been working with, your knowledge about the challenges nonprofits face, and your awareness of UW student life and the resources available on the UW campus. Devise a project that future students in this course could undertake with the organization you have been working with. Imagine that you have a $3000 budget. Outline in as much detail as possible, in five double-spaced pages, what this project would involve. Be sure to answer the following questions: What would be the goal? Why is this project necessary? What would be the benefit to the organization? Who would participate? How many students in the course (up to 20)? Would publicity be necessary and how would the students provide it? Provide a timeline for implementing the project, (one page in length), keeping in mind it would have to be implemented within the course of one semester. Also, provide a one-page budget (totaling $3000 or less). We will not work with Writing Fellows on this assignment. Papers will be graded according to the demonstrated benefit to the organization, thoroughness in describing the project, outlining the timeline and the budget, and feasibility of implementation.

Grading

Your performance on each part of the course will contribute to your final grade as follows:

Class participation, including field service	15%
Class assignments:	
Choosing placement site (credit / no credit basis)	4%
Community Involvement Agreement (cr / no cr)	3%
Discussion questions and other assignments (cr /no cr)	3%
Journal writing	15%
First paper	25%
SL budget assignment	10%
Second paper	<u>25%</u>
TOTAL	100%

The following are five examples of service-learning courses in different disciplines that offer students a range of formal and informal writing opportunities.

Writing Across the Curriculum

SERVICE-LEARNING WRITING ASSIGNMENTS FROM ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Public Service Announcements and Documentaries
Professor Patricia Loew
Life Sciences Communication 315: "Introduction to Digital Documentary Production"
Life Sciences Communication 620: "Service Learning in the Life Sciences: Advanced Video Production"

In both of these courses, students work in partnership with non-profit organizations (e.g., the Henry Vilas Zoo and Goodman Community Center) to create public service announcements (PSAs) and documentaries. Students regularly receive recognition: for example, LSC 315 student Noel Benedetti won the 2009 ADDY Silver Award, Student Category, for a PSA she developed for the Madison AIDS Network. This spring, students in the LSC 620 course are developing a 30-minute documentary that will be shown at this fall's Environmental Film Festival and at the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Life Science Commission. In addition to video production, students reflect on their service through journal entries discussed in class.

Study Abroad and Community-based Learning Reflection Writing
Professor Tess Arenas
Interdisciplinary / Environmental Studies 400: "Crossing Boundaries: Environmental Justice at the U.S.-Mexico Border"
Chican@/Latin@ Studies 510: Advanced Cultural Studies and Analysis

In the first course, students live in Brownsville, Texas, for approximately 22 days and work in the low-income *colonias* (neighborhoods on either side of the U.S.-Mexico border) and then attend lectures and take field trips each afternoon. Students write reflection journals and a final paper on the impact of their service learning and classroom experiences in the two countries. In 2006, this course received the North American Association of Summer Sessions Creative and Innovative Program Award of Merit.

In CLS 510, students engage in the Somos Latinas History Project of Wisconsin, interviewing Latina activists from Wisconsin to create an archive for the Wisconsin Historical Society. Composing reflection journals, students reflect on the interviewees' activist activities, experiences, ideology and political agenda using various postmodern and postcolonial frames from the course.

Publicity Materials, Position Papers, and Profiles
Rebecca Lorimer
English 201: "Intermediate Composition: The Writing Food Project"

Supported by a Humanities Exposed (HEX) grant for connecting UW-Madison with the broader Madison community, "The Writing Food Project" offers students in a Comm-B course the opportunity to volunteer at food pantries or community farms and gardens and to collaborate with them on writing for public use—e.g., profiles of local CSA farms or entries for an online "veggie-pedia." Students also write position papers on food issues in the form of articles and editorials to be published in partner newsletters and community newspapers.

Business Reviews and Strategic Planning
Professor Karyn Riddle
Journalism and Mass Communications 449: "Research and Strategy in Communication Campaigns"

Students conduct market research projects and write concise reports, summarizing client businesses, identifying problems and opportunities, and then developing strategic plans. In spring 2008, students worked with Travel Green Wisconsin and wrote an overview of "ecotourism," evaluated the health of the Wisconsin travel industry, and suggested opportunities for campaigns based on consumer trends.

Projects for Community Organizations
Professor Randy Stoecker
Rural Sociology: independent or special-study courses formed when a community issue arises and a group expresses interest

Students, individually or in groups, develop written materials for community organizations. Together, the students, professor, and community members plan an event to put the results into action, and students then serve as researchers, facilitators, and note-takers. Students write a final report, research paper, or poster for a community research event.

This informal pre-writing activity helps students imagine an audience beyond the classroom. Students create strategies to help them write for a public audience and brainstorm responses on their own or in project groups.

Rebecca Lorimer
English 201

PREPARING TO WRITE FOR A COMMUNITY AUDIENCE

1. Who are the intended and possible audiences for your project? Some ideas:
   - Self
   - Classmates
   - Pantry director
   - Pantry visitors
   - Elem/Middle/High Schools—teachers, administrators, parents
   - Students (where, which ages?)
   - Businesses (be specific)
   - Nonprofits (other pantries?)
   - Neighborhood communities (where, which ones?)
   - University community
   - Public at large
   - Friends
   - Instructor
   - **Others?**

2. What is the emotional personality of your audience? (impatient, interested, apathetic, supportive…)

3. What language, appeals, and tone would be the most effective for the audiences you wish to reach?

4. What will you need to explain in your project to these audiences? (Please detail each.)

5. What insights might you include to capture the attention of these audiences? (Please detail each.)

6. Why should they care about the issues you're addressing? How and where does this issue affect their lives, responsibilities, jobs, health, etc.?

7. Why might your audience be resistant to what you're presenting or recommending?

8. What are the concerns, commitments, values, and needs that prevent them from agreeing with you?

Professor Michael Thornton assigns reflection journals in his service-learning courses, where he asks students to connect course readings with their experiences in community sites.

Professor Michael Thornton
Afro-American Studies

SERVICE-LEARNING REFLECTION JOURNALS

Service learning—that is, learning beyond campus through direct engagement with communities in Madison—ignites insights and introspection for students that readings and class discussion fail to do. The key to service learning is aligning the course concepts you want students to learn with what an agency does so that service learning brings the course concepts to life.

In one of my undergraduate courses, "Introduction to Contemporary Afro-American Society," for example, the broad topics are race, class, and gender. To emphasize the course learning objectives, this past semester I worked with Centro Hispano, Family Voices, Bayview, Northport/Packer Community Center, UNIDOS Against Domestic Violence, and Lussier Community Center, all of whose missions align with the course concepts.

In weekly journals, students reflect on the following:

- an assigned reading and what it suggests about the world
- their service experience that week, especially what they saw, felt, and did at their placement sites
- the intersection of the reading and service experience—linking the two sections together, using the course idea to examine and explain what students felt or experienced at their sites.

For example, for one week of the course, prejudice is the topic. Students react to one of the several readings for that week about what the nature of prejudice is, why it persists, who has it (we all do), and how it is a natural (but too often destructive) aspect of our lives. In a typical entry for this week, students will take the idea of prejudice out of the textbook and into the real world. Many students will write about how they have no biases toward the people they will be working with, most of whom are of color and/or working class/poor.

This professed objectivity alters quickly, however, when students describe what they felt as the visit to the placement site loomed. For instance, the following is a typical entry (with specific prejudices replaced by stand-ins "A" and "B"):
I thought that I carried with me no prejudices about group A. But as I pondered my visit, I became concerned. At the site I immediately felt uneasy, partly because I was the only B there. This surprised me since I have never really interacted with As before and did not know where this fear came from. I am most intrigued at why I was unaware that I held these views of As.

While starting out at this place, by the end of the semester—with constant questioning, prodding, coaxing, and even challenging from other students and from me—most students end up at a very different place both academically and personally.

The following is the assignment sheet I give to students:

Reflection Journal Assignment

"Introduction to Contemporary Afro-American Society"

Journal Reflections
These should record what you feel and/or think in regard to the different site experiences and tasks. You should also record instances where you used concepts, theories, or knowledge from your course work. These may include recording challenges and brainstorming of solutions. The focus should be recording what you're learning–your thoughts, insights, observations, and feelings and how they are linked to course material.

Journal Content
Focus on what you are learning and how course content informs your understanding of what you "see" at your site but also what happens around the sight. The latter may mean how others think and talk about those at your site (or others like them), why your site contains the kinds of people it does, why there is a need to help them, what you feel about these, what factors lead to creating and maintaining sites like this, etc. Thus the experience here is both immediate (what you can see and directly experience) but also placed into a broader context of what's happening in the city and the society.

Continued.

Example 1: Not good (Merely recounting what happened, with no insight about yourself, the situation or course ideas.)

I supervised kids at play this week. I will do this next time too. One child told me about her mother having to work late into the evening; and that she must take care of herself and a sibling in her absence. I wonder why the mother does not make more time for her children.

Example 2: Good

I supervised kids at play this week. I will do this next time too. One child told me about her mother having to work late into the evening; and that she must take care of herself and a sibling in her absence. I wonder what this situation will do to how the child develops? I can only imagine what the mother also feels because she probably has little choice about her work schedule. According to Lareau, having to work and not having time to spend with her children must contribute to a natural growth philosophy. It would be very difficult to plan the child's schedule AND take her to ballet, soccer, etc. if the parent has neither the time nor money to do so. So I imagine that how parents socialize their kids is heavily dependent on what kind of resources they have at their disposal, such as time and money to chauffeur her kids to activities. I would hope that I would make the time, but that is obviously easier said than done.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR REFLECTIONS
What do you see? What's particularly interesting or notable about the population, program, how things work?

What are you feeling and why?

What are you learning?

Has what you've "seen" at your site supported or contradicted what you've learned in class?

How did you handle a tough situation and why? What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

How are you growing as a person from your experience?

Are you learning any skills?

How are the people you work with changing over the course of the semester?

How do decisions get made at your site formally and informally?

What could be improved programmatically and administratively about how the organization works? Why haven't these improvements been made?

How does funding affect what happens at your site? How would your site do things differently if unlimited funding were available? What limits funding?

What Do Students Take Away?
Students' comments reflect common outcomes for this service-learning course. Take these examples:

- "I felt empowered to do something more."
- The course is not only "educational, but it is literally life-changing."
- The course "gives us information that we can apply to make both our lives and the lives of others better!"
- The course "made me use what I've learned in class out in my day-to-day life."

As these comments testify, what is especially exciting and promising about service learning is the long-lasting influence on students as they choose involvement in their local communities long after graduation. Many who are initially least enamored by its charms, when pushed to service, very often become its greatest advocates. Service, done well and with writing to deepen reflection, leads students to see something much larger than the self. It can open their minds and melt their hearts, breaking the bonds between seemingly disparate characters.

Service learning does not work well for everyone nor for every course. Even so, most students taking a service-learning course will see a clearer route to linking up with what it takes to bring our country closer to what we should be all about: hope, fairness, and justice for us all.

In this course's final assignment, which is designed to help students synthesize what they've learned from course readings and service learning, Professor Maurice Gattis lets students choose between two compelling options.

Professor Maurice Gattis
Social Work 578

HOMELESSNESS AND SERVICE LEARNING: FINAL ASSIGNMENT

The purpose of the final assignment is to build off of course material and illustrate key concepts that you have personally learned over the course of the semester. **The final assignment is worth 30 points and is due in the Learn@UW dropbox on Friday, May 11, 2012, by noon.**

A preliminary abstract is due at the beginning of class on **April 17, 2011**. This abstract is worth a total of 5 points (separate from the 30 points above). The preliminary abstract assignment is described under each option below.

You have two options to choose from for your final assignment (described below).

Option 1:

Part 1: Choose three images (can be from anyplace) that represent a concept of homelessness you have learned about over the course of the semester.

Part 2: For <u>each</u> image, do the following:
a) Explain how the image you chose represents a homelessness concept you learned about this semester. Be VERY specific. Be reflective on what you learned about the topic in the semester.

b) Write a 3 ½-4 page literature review about the concept (that the image represents) using course content and/or additional research you do.

In your writing, you need to explain WHY the image you chose represents something you learned. You can be creative, but you MUST make the connection between the image you chose, why it represents something you learned in this class, and supporting it with literature. Remember, you need to do this for EACH image (total of 3). The paper should be a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 12 written pages (this excludes your images).

For example:

Image 1: African American man

I chose to represent homelessness with this image of an African American man. Ethnic minority individuals are disproportionately represented within the homeless population. This may be attributed to the systematic racism that is prevalent within the United States. As Johnson (2008) points out, homelessness and the African American community is not a new issue. Johnson (2008) details a historical perspective.... *I could continue on by pointing out how the intersection of racism and poverty put ethnic minorities at a higher risk of homelessness. Further, I could then equate this to Gattis (2009) article and look at the similarities and/or differences with the homelessness problem sexual minority youths face. Or, I could have done independent research on how the issue of slavery has contributed to the disproportionate number of African American men living on the streets (and supported this with references).*

Paper Review Rubric for Option 1

1. Each image (1 point/image) ……………………………………………………...… 3 points
2. Write up on image (8 points/image)
   Breakout per image:
   a. Description of why this image represents something you learned ……… 2 points
   b. Literature review……………………………………………………………… 6 points
   (8 points per image x 3 images = 24 points)
3. Adherence to Guidelines/Grammar/Spelling/APA formatting.....…………………… 3 points

Total Points…………………………………………………………………………..…………. 30 points

The preliminary abstract for Option 1 should include at least one topic area that you plan to find an image for and supporting research for that image. You must include one or two sentences about why that image represents something you learned during the semester and 3 preliminary references (in APA-style) you will use in your literature support of that image.

Option 2:

For this assignment, you have been called to testify to Congress as a concerned citizen regarding homelessness in America and need to convince them to increase funding for homeless services. You have been asked to address the following issues in your testimony:

<u>1. Scope</u>
What is the scope of the problem?
How does it affect Americans?
<u>2. Evidence</u>
What does research suggest about homelessness in America?
<u>3. Special Population</u>
What special populations are impacted by homelessness (pick 1)?
<u>4. Experiences</u>
What personal experiences have you had in dealing with homelessness in America?
How have your perceptions and ideas of homelessness changed as a result of experiences with individuals experiencing homelessness?
<u>5. Recommendations</u>
What kind of plan or strategy do you think should be implemented to reduce homelessness?
<u>6. Concluding Remarks</u>

Paper Review Rubric for Option 2

Page numbers in parentheses are *suggested.*

1. Scope …………………………………………………………………………… 5 points (2 pages)
2. Evidence………………………………………………………………..…………….. 5 points (2 pages)
3. Special Population…………………………………………………………… 5 points (2 pages)
4. Experiences………………………..………………… ……………….………….. 5 points (2 pages)
5. Recommendations…………………………………................................. 6 points (2 pages)
6. Conclusion…………………………………………………………….………..… 2 points (1 page)
7. Adherence to Guidelines…………………………………………………… 2 points

Total Points = 30

The preliminary abstract for Option 2 should be a ½-1 page description of the topic(s) that you will address in the paper as well as 3 references you will be using in APA-style. This abstract is worth 5 points.

For each option, please format using one-inch margins, double-spacing, and Times New Roman 12-inch font. Pages should be numbered and stapled together. These assignments should be checked thoroughly for correct spelling and grammar**. Use APA style with in-text parenthetical references as well as a reference list. Remember that material that is not correctly cited will be considered plagiarized.**

TA Rebecca Lorimer uses reflection not only to guide students to think more deeply about their volunteer experience, but also as an informal assessment of how the service-learning experience is progressing.

Rebecca Lorimer
English 201

A Sequence of Reflection Assignments

Community Partner Reflection One

After your first visit to the food pantry, write a two-page (typed, double-spaced) reflection on the experience. This is an informal reflective assignment, so don't worry too much about grammatical correctness or organization. Simply try to relay your thoughts on the visit to me in a manner that best captures your experience. Think about the following questions and answer them in your own style and organization.

1. How would you describe the visit in one or two sentences?
2. Describe one scene or event from the visit that you found noteworthy, interesting, or funny.
3. What were your expectations of the pantry? Was the reality the same or different?
4. How could the visit have been better?
5. Any other thoughts or comments?

Community Partner Reflection Two

After your fourth or fifth visit to the food pantry, write a two-page (typed, double-spaced) reflection on the experience. Remember, don't worry too much about grammatical correctness or organization. Simply try to relay your thoughts on the visit to me in a manner that best captures your experience. Think about the following questions and answer them in your own style and organization.

1. How are visits at your partner site going?
2. Anything unusual, interesting, or surprising happening at your site?
3. What are the activities you find yourself engaging in when you volunteer?
4. How does what you are learning from your community partner confirm or change your opinions on the food issues they are addressing?
5. Any other thoughts or comments?

Community Partner Reflection Three

Now that your visits with your community partner are almost over, write a two-page reflection on the experience. Remember, this reflection is informal. Think about the following questions and answer them in your own style and organization.

1. How would you describe your visits or volunteering experience as a whole?
2. How did your expectations of your partner play out through working with them?
3. How could the visits have been better?
4. How does what you learned from your volunteering experience confirm or change your opinions on the food issues your community partner is addressing?
5. What are the specific writing/thinking skills you've been using while creating texts for your community partner? And how might these move with you into future academic and professional settings?

This final course project asks students to synthesize their semester's learning from course readings, discussions, and community-based learning experiences to take a stance on the course theme (rethinking after school education) and their personal learning process throughout the semester.

Professor Bianca Baldridge
Educational Policy Studies 500

A Critical Reflection Final Paper for Community-Based Learning

In Educational Policy Studies 500: "Rethinking After School Education," students engage in community-based learning projects at local schools. The course culminates with the following final project:

Final Paper Description from Syllabus (40 points)

Incorporating course readings and ideas from class discussions, write about your vision and understanding of after school and community-based education. Using course materials (at least 5 course readings) and class discussions reflect on your experience at your site; what if anything, has made you rethink the possibilities of after school education? What are the major challenges you see with regard to after school education? Through an *analysis* of course readings and your experience at your service-learning site, please critically discuss the multiple dimensions of after school spaces; including but not limited to, policy, social context, funding, politics, pedagogy, philosophy, organizational culture, student engagement, staff relationships, and adult-youth relationships.

It may be helpful for you to think about the final paper in two parts: 1) Course Theme Reflection and 2) Site Reflection. The guiding questions below will help you think through these elements of the paper.

Course Theme Reflection: Rethinking After School Education

- What if anything, has made you rethink the possibilities of after school education?
- What are the major challenges you see with regard to after school education?
- Through an *analysis* of course readings and your experience at your site, please critically discuss the multiple dimensions of after school spaces; including but not limited to: policy, social context, funding, politics, pedagogy, philosophy, organizational culture, student engagement, staff relationships, and adult-youth relationships.
- Incorporating course readings and ideas from class discussions, write about your vision and understanding of after school and community-based education.

Site Reflection

- What have you learned about yourself?
- What have you learned about the community you engaged with?
- What have you contributed to the community site?
- What assumptions did you hold prior to working in your site?
- What values, opinions, beliefs have changed?
- What was the most important lesson learned?
- In what ways have you been challenged?

Professor Betty Kramer gives Masters in Social Work students the option to put course learning into practice by completing a therapeutic intervention with a willing participant. Students then report in writing on their planning process, implementation, and the feedback they received from participants.

Professor Betty Kramer
Social Work 821

SERVICE LEARNING: APPLIED INTERVENTION IN SOCIAL WORK

Many students report that service learning projects provide them with real life, rewarding learning opportunities that go beyond academic concepts to the application of these concepts, and the development of helping skills and therapeutic techniques. This assignment will provide the opportunity to learn more about one of the interventions or approaches explored in class and then carry out the intervention with a willing participant (i.e,. one who understands that you want the opportunity to practice and evaluate the intervention). Only select this assignment if you believe it will be feasible to identify an appropriate willing elder, family or group of elders (i.e, if doing a group based intervention).

The task:

1. Select an intervention examined in the course that you feel would be feasible to practice, and that that you would like the opportunity to further investigate. Options might include reminiscence, life review, dignity therapy, group work, mindfulness approaches, cognitive behavioral approaches, validation, family conferencing).
2. Complete course readings and identify additional resources to help you gain sufficient understanding to practice the intervention with integrity and develop a plan for how you will carry out the intervention.
3. Identify an older client and/or family/group from your field setting or from another social worker (e.g., at a community agency or nursing home), explain the intervention process and secure their permission to participate.
4. Carry out the intervention employing what you have learned from the course and your additional resources.
5. After you carry out the intervention, seek feedback from the elder (family or group) to gain their insights regarding the strengths and limitations, potential benefits, and how it might be improved in the future.
6. Turn in your 10-15 page written report with the following headings:
    a. **Selected Intervention:** What is the intervention you selected to practice and what was your rationale?
    b. **Planning Process:** How did you identify resources to better understand this intervention? What did you learn from your literature search that helped you to develop your plan for carrying out the intervention.
    c. **Client Selection:** Provide a brief description of the client/family/group that was involved in the intervention (use pseudonyms to protect confidentiality) and how they were identified.
    d. **Implementation Description:** Describe what transpired during the intervention.
    e. **Skills Employed:** What skills did you employ?
    f. **Evaluation of the Intervention:** How would you evaluate the intervention. How did it go? What were the outcomes? What feedback did you receive. What would you do differently in the future. What did you learn from carrying out this intervention
    g. **Reference list:** Provide a typed APA style reference list including all resources you drew upon (lecture and course readings should be included as appropriate)

CRITERIA FOR GRADING DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT

	Grading Criteria	**Possible Score**	**Your Score**
I.	Organization of paper and rationale Clarity and support of main points	15	______
II.	Use of Supporting Literature & Articulation of Appropriate planning process, client selection Implementation, skills employed	25	______
III.	Evaluation of the Intervention	5	______
IV.	Technical detail Spelling, grammar, syntax References and APA style	5	______
	TOTAL Score	50	______

RESPONDING, EVALUATING, GRADING

Brad Hughes, Director of Writing Across the Curriculum, teaches instructors how best to think about prioritizing their expectations for student writing by showing them how to distinguish between Global and Local writing concerns.

Brad Hughes
Writing Across the Curriculum

GLOBAL AND LOCAL CONCERNS IN STUDENT WRITING: EMPHASIZING THE RIGHT THING AT THE RIGHT TIME:

A key principle for teaching writing:

Research shows that students are often confused by what we—their writing teachers—want them to concentrate on in their writing and in their revisions. They may think, for example, that correcting semicolon mistakes is as important as anticipating and addressing counter-arguments or clarifying or strengthening the main point of their paper. And our comments on their writing too often lead students to make only superficial revisions to words and sentences, overlooking larger conceptual, rhetorical, and structural revisions that would most improve a paper. So as we design writing assignments, talk with our students about their writing, develop evaluation criteria, offer advice about revisions, and comment on and evaluate our students' final papers, we need to find ways to communicate clearly with students about *different levels of revision* and about *priorities for their writing and revising*.

We can help signal priorities if we clearly differentiate between *global* and *local* writing concerns. In our assignments, comments, conferences, and evaluation criteria, we can help students by focusing first on conceptual- and structural-level planning and revisions *before* grammatical- and lexical-level revisions. By no means am I advocating that we ignore language problems in our students' writing. Rather, I'm urging us to *start* our assignments, comments, and conferences by focusing on global writing concerns particular to that assignment—so that we and our students don't overlook those; so that students get clear guidance from us about how to strengthen their ideas, their analyses, and their arguments; and so that students have papers worth editing and polishing. *Then* we can turn our attention—and our students'—to improving sentences, words, and punctuation.

Global Writing Concerns (GLOCs)

In the assignment, in comments, in discussions with students, and in evaluation criteria, focus first on whole-text issues such as ideas or content, focus, genre, argument, thesis, development, organization, clarity of purpose, awareness of audience. Asking questions like these can help us focus on this level:

- Does the draft respond specifically and appropriately to the conceptual demands of the assignment?
- Does the writer demonstrate a good understanding of the readings (data, field observations, lab experiment…) that s/he's writing about?
- Does the writer have something worth saying? Does the draft make points appropriately sophisticated (original, interesting, provocative . . .) for the assignment, the level of the course, etc.?
- Does the draft have clear main points?
- Does the draft match or fulfill the writer's intentions?
- Does the draft do justice to the writer's ideas?
- Is the draft effectively organized? Does it follow a logical sequence of points?
- Are points adequately developed and explained?
- Is there appropriate and sufficient evidence to support the main points?
- Does the introduction effectively signal the topic, scope, and organization of the paper?
- Are paragraphs unified and well developed?

Local Writing Concerns (LOCs)

Then focus on more local concerns at the paragraph, sentence, and word levels:

- Are there effective transitions between sections?
- How can the style be improved?
- Where do sentence or word problems interfere with the writer's communicating clearly with readers? Or where are there muddy or confusing sentences?
- Are there any grammatical errors?
- How can the word choice be improved?
- Are there punctuation errors?
- Are there proofreading mistakes?

Some suggestions for course instructors about responding to student writing effectively and efficiently.

Brad Hughes
Writing Across the Curriculum

RESPONDING TO STUDENT WRITING

1. Frontload your efforts so that what you have to respond to is better than it would be otherwise and so that students learn more:
   - clarify your expectations and state them explicitly in the assignment
   - make sure that the course gives students a chance to practice the kinds of thinking that you expect in their papers
   - give students a chance to talk about their thinking and writing in progress
   - discuss, with your class, excerpts from successful sample papers, written by students; talk about what specifically makes these papers successful
   - use peer review
   - build process and revision into the assignment by requiring students to submit drafts by certain dates; then have students revise based on responses they receive from you and from peers
   - hold conferences with students to discuss their work in progress
   - anticipate and head off common problems—by sharing your evaluation criteria, by discussing samples, by giving students a chance to see other students' work in progress, by getting students to talk and ask questions about assignments, by teaching students some of the skills they need to succeed with this paper (e.g., how to examine sources critically, how to review a book, how to incorporate source material into a paper, how to organize the discussion section of a scientific report, how to use the documentation system you want students to use).

2. Decide on, put in writing, share, and discuss evaluation criteria.

3. If you are sharing responsibility for a course with other faculty or TAs, meet with them to discuss responding and grading.

4. Communicate with your students about your feedback. If you make shorthand notes in the margin (e.g., "awk" for "awkward phrasing"), give them an explanatory list of the marks you often make so they may decode. But don't stop there! In addition to sharing your evaluation criteria, spend time in class discussing the kinds of feedback you're giving, and give students the opportunity to ask questions about your responses.

5. Have students submit self-evaluation sheets with their papers.

6. Have students submit previous graded papers from your course with new papers. You will then be able to respond to and guide students' development as writers.

7. Respond in ways appropriate for the particular type of writing, for that particular stage of development (drafts vs. finished papers, journals vs. research papers).

8. Consider holding conferences to discuss your comments individually with students, because, without discussion, written comments on papers are often ignored or misunderstood.

9. Develop an evaluation checklist, tied to your evaluation criteria. Although you won't want to limit your response to checks on a list, using a list can help ensure that, in your response, you're emphasizing what you decided matters most in an assignment.

10. In your response, emphasize large-scale issues—quality of ideas, arguments, experimental or research design, depth of analysis, findings, use of evidence, focus, clarity of main idea, development of ideas, logic, understanding of course concepts, etc.

11. Praise successful parts of papers.

12. Don't feel compelled to comment on everything that's wrong or that could be improved. Research shows that students are often overwhelmed by voluminous comments and thus miss an instructor's main suggestions. If you can, first emphasize the strengths of a piece of writing (praise is a great motivator), and then identify and explain the one or two main ways in which a piece of writing could be improved.

13. Resist the temptation to edit or rewrite page after page of a student's paper. If there are problems with grammar, word choice, style, and punctuation throughout a paper, your time is better spent identifying and illustrating corrections for the problems in one section of the paper. Indicate in your comments that similar problems appear in the rest of the paper. Then meet with the student to discuss these problems and to ask the student to revise the entire paper, paying special attention to the problems you have identified in part of it. Offer to meet again to provide additional help and to respond to the revision, and encourage the student to arrange at least two appointments with a Writing Center instructor for more help.

14. Make both your praise and your criticisms as specific and clear as possible. Beware of the potential for miscommunication when you use abstract or unspecified terms in your comments, terms that your students may not understand (e.g., "flow" and "focus" may not mean the same thing to your students as they do to you; and what specifically makes a section "good" needs to be clear to the student-writer).

15. Don't waste much time responding to what may be minimal efforts. Your time is probably better spent talking with the student to discuss the situation.

16. Share and discuss some successful papers with the whole class when you return papers.

17. "Publish" some student writing in a copy-shop packet, which both current and future students in your course can read. By broadening the audience for students' writing, this kind of publication casts student-writers as experts on their subject matter and encourages them to do their best possible work.

Elisabeth Miller explores some of the reasons that students' papers may fail to meet instructors' expectations. She encourages instructors to view writing as a complex, challenging process—and offers some concrete steps to take to help students navigate that complexity.

Elisabeth Miller
Writing Across the Curriculum

BEYOND LAZINESS: LOOKING BENEATH THE SURFACE OF STUDENTS' PAPERS

There's no denying that students sometimes do not put enough effort into their writing: busy schedules full of obligations from work, social or personal engagements, and demanding course loads drain away time from your course's writing assignments. And it's even safe to assume that some students lose time playing video games or chatting on Facebook. The truth is, we simply cannot know how much time and effort they actually put into a writing assignment.

When you do receive papers that fail to meet your standards—not addressing your assignment, failing to make a clear and compelling argument, demonstrating organizational flaws, or containing numerous significant sentence-level problems—we urge you to consider some other ways of looking beneath the surface of students' "messy" papers.

Here are a number of reasons—beyond laziness and lack of commitment to your course—that students' writing may fail to meet your standards. For each reason, we include a few "next steps to take" to improve students' writing and learning.

Reason 1: New disciplines, new levels, new tasks

Students are learning how to write in new disciplines (and often many at once)—from biology to Spanish to psychology. Research shows that as students and professionals take on new writing challenges, they sometimes regress before they master new skills (Williams & Colomb; Bean). As writers get to know the ways of thinking, jargon, and genre conventions of a particular field and the writing it requires, their sentences become messier, harder to understand, and less effective overall. Learning to write is hard: it takes time and practice. Moreover, there's no single kind of "writing." Instead, students learn to write at particular levels, for certain purposes, for specific audiences, in a range of genres—and they re-learn what it means to write in all of these different conditions. Sometimes students may also simply fail to understand the key goals of new or unfamiliar tasks or assignments. Asked to "analyze," for instance, students often turn in what instructors view as description or summary bereft of analysis.

<u>Steps you can take:</u>
Realize that, though you know the ins-and-outs of lab reports or thesis statements in literary analyses, it took you time to learn those conventions. Provide students with models of the genres in which they'll be writing. Look over those samples—of former students' writing or course readings—as a class and talk about what works well and what doesn't. Emphasize particular conventions that you want students to address on each assignment: perhaps an introduction and a thesis for a first assignment, then focusing in more on a discussion section in the next assignment, then adding an abstract to the final paper of the semester.

If many students missed the main goals of your assignment, consider substantially revising your guidelines and the way you explain them. John Bean explains that when students are confused about the goal of a paper, they tend to view it as a "topic" rather than a problem that requires analysis. Bean calls these "all about" papers that catalog everything a student knows about a topic rather than making an argument. By framing assignments as responses to pointed questions, we can help students understand new, challenging tasks of academic analysis.

Reason 2: Limited experience with academic literacy

Students may lack a privileged literacy background or experience writing in the genres of the university, including composing sustained research papers or thinking and writing critically. Socio-economic factors and lack of access to educational resources (a circumstance often attached to other identity factors like race and disability) cause some students to have had less experience with, and support for, developing their writing. It is important to recognize that students come to college with a variety of backgrounds. Even with privileged access to education, students often have little experience writing longer papers or doing the kinds of analytical writing necessary for so many college courses.

<u>Steps you can take:</u>
A crucial point of support for students with non-privileged literacy backgrounds is helping them to understand what writing at the college-level requires. Consider meeting during your office hours individually with students who are struggling. In a one-to-one conversation, you can often more successfully determine what problems are most pressing for students' writing. Together, you can also set goals and priorities for revision or next papers. You can also link students to campus resources like the Writing Center to spend more individualized time on their particular writing goals (see "Encouraging Students to Use the Writing Center Effectively" in "Section 14: Further Resources for Instructors and Students"), the McBurney Disability Resource Center, the Multicultural Student Center, or the Counseling Center.

You may also consider giving a brief survey to students at the beginning of the course to get a sense of their experiences with writing, level of confidence, self-described strengths and weaknesses, goals for the course and for developing their writing, and any other questions or concerns that they'd like to share. Gathering responses through a written survey makes room for you to find out more about students' backgrounds and challenges. You may also choose to discuss these responses—particularly goals—in individual conferences early on in the semester to make it known that you're available to support students.

Reason 3: Not enough process

Writing requires time and multiple rounds of revision to improve, and—as many of us know from experience—most people won't write ahead of time unless it's required. Without having process—pre-writing, drafting, and revising—built into an assignment, students are likely turning in a first draft. And a first draft is, by nature, messier and less developed.

<u>Steps you can take:</u>
If your assignment does not already include various stages, consider adding in pre-writing (outlining, idea-mapping, paper proposals, etc.), rough drafts, or peer review sessions to encourage students to write before the last-minute and to revise that writing. In this Sourcebook, see "Section 3: Sequencing Assignments in Your Course," "Section 5: Coaching Students to Succeed with Assignments," and "Section 8: Conferencing and Student Peer Review," for examples of ways to structure this process in your course.

Reason 4: It's not as bad as it looks

Often, a few repeated errors make a student's paper look particularly dire. John Bean reminds us that there are almost always "many more correct sentences than flawed ones" even in the most "error-laden" essay (74).

<u>Steps you can take:</u>
Refrain from marking every error. You'll save yourself time and avoid overwhelming students. Instead, mark one or two key examples of the error, and attempt to explain or illustrate how to address the problem. Develop priorities, too, for determining the relative severity of errors, and choose to mark the more significant ones that affect meaning. See "Global and Local Concerns in Student Writing: Emphasizing the Right Thing at the Right Time" in this section of the Sourcebook.

Finally, keep in mind that no one is ever done learning to write, and writing is never easy. The reasons beneath the surface of problems in student writing are many and complex. We hope understanding some of these reasons and following some of these suggested steps help you to respond to students with that complexity in mind.

References

Bean, John. *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2011.

Williams, Joseph and Gregory Colomb. *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

TA Annette Vee offers an alternative to written feedback on student drafts. She advocates recording audio feedback to achieve a conversational, engaged, and still-thoughtful exchange with students.

Annette Vee
English

RESPONDING TO STUDENTS' DRAFTS USING AUDIO

It's relatively easy to record an audio file and send that to your students as an attachment to an email, to post that file to your course management software or course website. DOIT can provide instruction on how to create and share audio files with students: https://it.wisc.edu/

My Method
To provide students with audio feedback on their papers, I began by reading their 3-5 page double-spaced drafts carefully, just I did for my written comments. Since I had electronic copies of their papers, I didn't make marginal notes; however, on printed essays, I might have made marks in the margins to indicate places I wanted to talk about. As I read each essay, I wrote down a list of issues I wanted to discuss, making sure to prioritize global concerns, such as inadequate use of sources or underdeveloped places in the argument. Alongside the places I felt needed improvement, I found sections of the argument that were particularly strong, phrasing I found marvelous, or evidence of a marked improvement on a student's past efforts. I spent a few minutes reviewing this list and selecting sections of the essay, then I collected my thoughts and hit "record." Editing the audio file to take out my spoken stops and starts would have taken a lot of time and it would have detracted from my conversational tone, so I recorded most responses in just one take.

As I recorded, I pretended the student was there with me in a conference. The general structure of my audio response mirrored my written responses to students' drafts: a word of praise about what was working well in the draft, followed by specific ways the next draft could be improved, and ending with a positive note to encourage their revision process. I began by offering a friendly greeting and a general comment of praise about the paper, such as "Hi, Betsy! I'm going to respond to your paper about X. First of all, I'm glad you chose this website for your analysis! There are so many interesting things to write about there." In the middle section of the recording, I was able to talk through my reactions to various points in students' papers, offering more nuance than I usually can in written responses through the tone of my voice and the natural efficiency of speech. When I wanted to refer to a specific section or sentence to address a local concern about writing, I read the student's writing out loud to direct him to the right place: "In your third paragraph, where you write X…" In closing I said something like: "Exploring the implications of X would be a really interesting place for you to take this, and I'd be happy to meet with you as your ideas develop for your next draft. I look forward to reading it, Betsy!" The audio format allowed me to explain my concerns in much more detail than in my handwritten comments, and at the end of each recording, I was also able to offer a short recap of the strengths of the paper and the best places for the student to invest time on improvements.

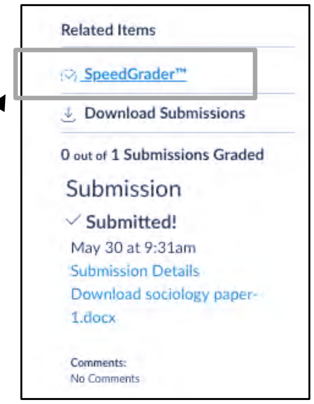
You can use the SpeedGrader feature on Canvas to respond to students' writing assignments. This brief guide shows how to use SpeedGrader (1) to make written, audio, and/or video comments, (2) add annotated comments using DocViewer, and (3) evaluate assignments with a rubric.

Mike Haen
Writing Across the Curriculum

A BRIEF HOW-TO GUIDE: USING SPEEDGRADER TO RESPOND TO STUDENT WRITING

UW-Madison's centrally-supported learning management system Canvas (adopted in 2018) offers a feature called SpeedGrader, which provides convenient and efficient options for responding to student writing. This guide synthesizes material available from Canvas Training Course for Instructors.

I. Background: What is SpeedGrader?



SpeedGrader allows you to view students' writing assignments, comment on those assignments, and evaluate and grade them. With this tool, you can incorporate and use rubrics to evaluate student work. Students can also use the feature to add comments.

Here's how to access SpeedGrader: Once you have created a new writing assignment on Canvas, click on that assignment until you see an **image on the right-hand side of your screen** (as shown to the right).

Below is a screenshot of what a student paper looks like in SpeedGrader. You should see a similar page after clicking on the SpeedGrader icon shown to the right.

A Student Paper in SpeedGrader

The paper shown below (from pages 237-238 in the Sourcebook) is from a Sociology course taught by UW-Madison Professor Jim Raymo. On the right side of the page, SpeedGrader provides you with the date and time the student submitted their paper, a place to enter the student's grade, and a space to leave assignment comments. Note the arrow pointing to the **DocViewer toolbar** as well. The DocViewer toolbar features are described later.

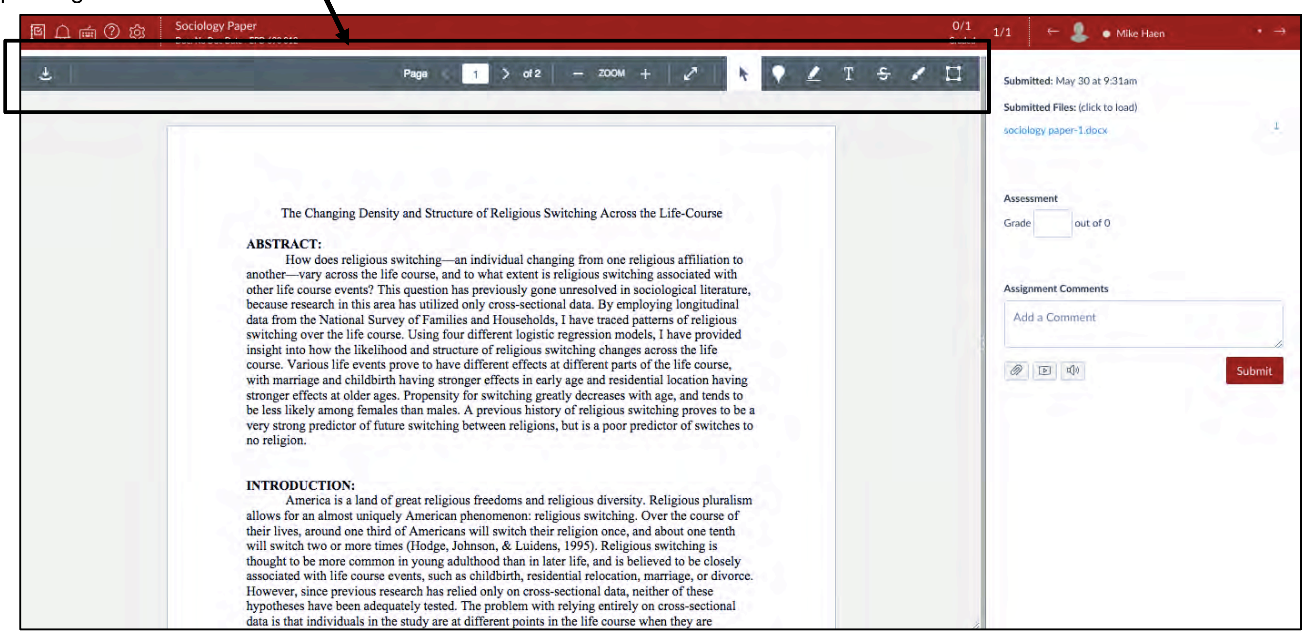


Figure 1: A Student Paper in SpeedGrader

II. Making Written, Audio, and/or Video End Comments

You can use SpeedGrader to give end comments on student papers. In figure 2 to the right, you'll see several options: (1) the '**assignment comments**' box where you can write a comment, (2) the '**file attachment**' option which can be used to submit your comments in a PDF or Word Document copy of the students' submission, (3) a '**media comment**' option, and (4) a '**speech recognition'** commenting option.

When submitting a media comment (#3), you can choose to record/upload a comment. You will need the latest version of Adobe flash player to do this. With speech recognition (#4), you can record your spoken comments and those comments will be transcribed automatically.

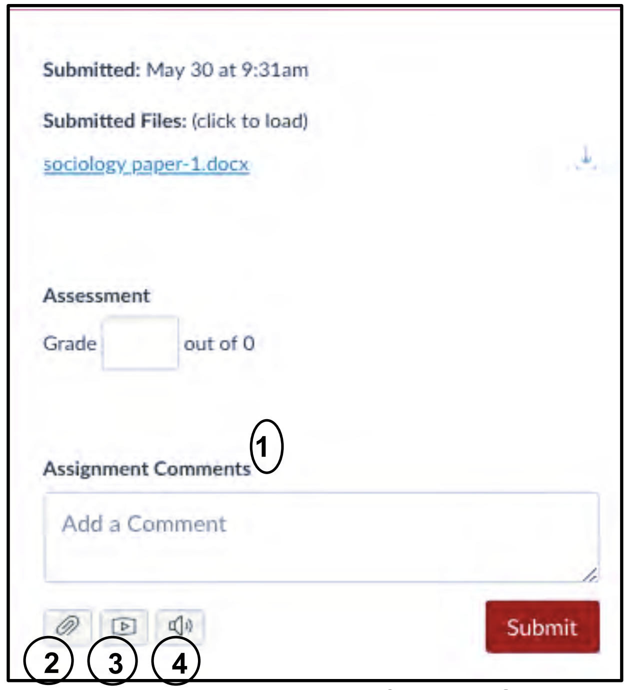


Figure 2: Assessment and Comment Section

III. Using the DocViewer Toolbar to Make Marginal Comments

With the DocViewer toolbar, you can use one of six annotation types for commenting on a student submission.

As shown below in figure three, the **highlight annotation** is similar to inserting comments in a Microsoft Word document.

In addition to the (2) highlight annotation, the toolbar includes a (1) **point annotation**, (3) **freetext annotation**, (4) **strikeout annotation**, (5) **free draw annotation**, and (6) **area annotation**. With the freetext annotation, you can insert a text box (with your comments) over the top of the student's writing. The free draw annotation is similar to using a pen or pencil to circle, underline, and write on the student's text. And the area annotation provides a way to insert boxes around certain passages and then make marginal comments.

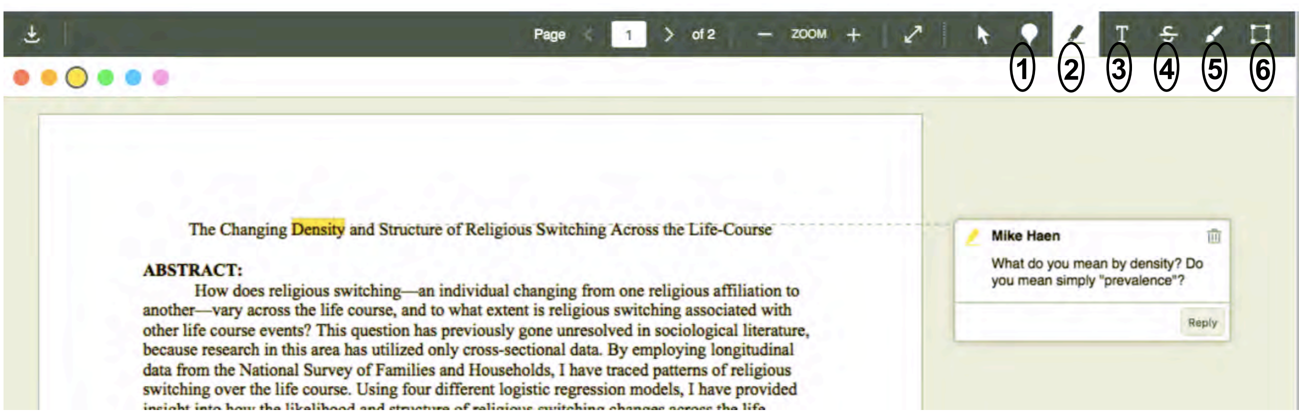


Figure 3: Using Highlight Annotations to Give Feedback

When clicking on the point annotation (#1) and area annotation (#6), a comment box will show up immediately. For the highlight (#2), strikeout (#4), and free draw (#5) annotations, if you want to add a comment box you need to click on the comment box icon that will appear after the initial annotation. You and your students can reply to comments, but only the user who created the comment can delete it. As shown above, you and your students can see the number of pages in a document and can zoom in and out. Note, **<u>students might struggle to view annotations on their phones or tablet devices</u>. <u>Encourage them to view annotations on a computer</u>.**

IV. Evaluating Assignments with Rubrics in SpeedGrader

SpeedGrader also supports the use of rubrics when evaluating student writing. When creating and editing any assignment, you can create a rubric or add one that you previously used/saved in Canvas. Below, you'll see the standard template that is provided when you create a new rubric. The template includes description of criterion for the assignment, corresponding ratings for each criterion, and points earned.

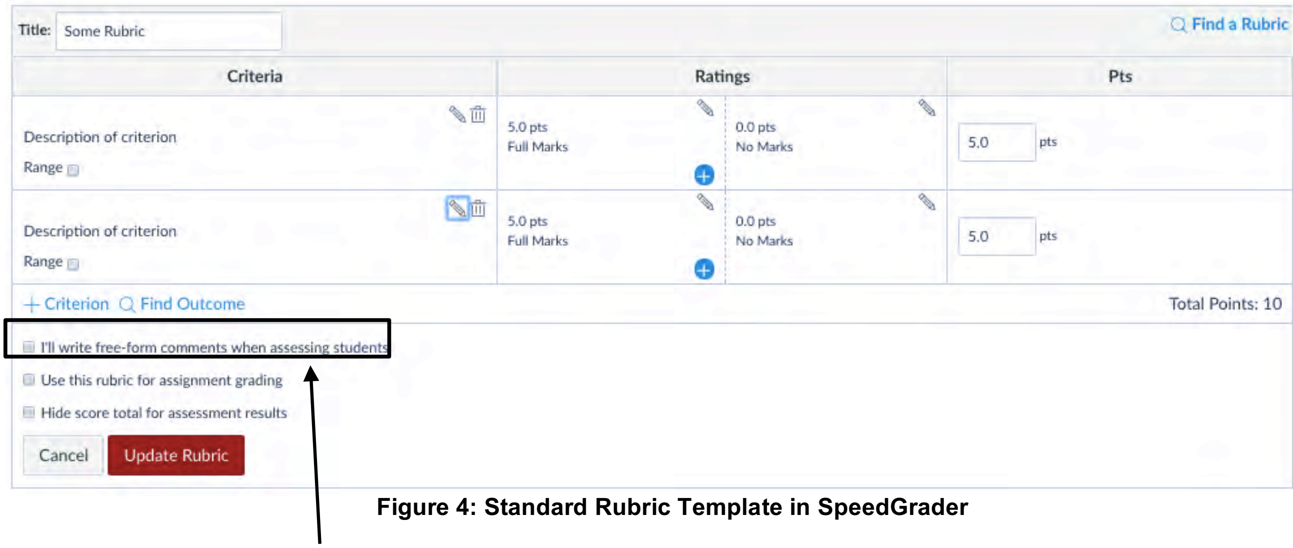


Figure 4: Standard Rubric Template in SpeedGrader

Note the option to "**write free-form comments when assessing students**." As shown in Figure 5 below, one of the benefits of using the "free-form comments" rubric is that you have the option to <u>save comments for later use.</u> When typing these free-form comments on student submissions, you will be able to scroll through previously saved comments and add them to student papers, as shown in Figure 6. This feature is especially useful for large lecture courses.

Figure 5: A "Free-Form Comments" Rubric in SpeedGrader

Figure 6: Selecting Saved Comments for Reuse in SpeedGrader

V. A Sample Assignment and Rubric in Canvas

Deb Shapiro
The Information School

LIBRARY & INFORMATION STUDIES (LIS) 646: INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE AND INTERACTION DESIGN

Metadata Fact Sheet Assignment (from Faculty Associate Debra Shapiro)

This exercise is the first component of your group project. Groups will research the metadata standard(s) in use in your selected OI system, and produce a 1-2 page fact sheet. Standards include metadata schemes, sometimes called schema, or element sets; controlled vocabularies, or lists of terms; encoding; and other associated standards. See the week 5 and 6 readings especially Jenn Riley's Seeing Standards Glossary for guidance on what is a metadata standard.

The first step is for your group to analyze your OI system for standards. These may be existing standards that you will identify using the readings above, or local practices that you observe in your analysis of the system. You may select a single, prominent, standard in use in your system to cover in your fact sheet, or you may cover several standards. I suggest that groups limit to covering **two** standards at maximum. The purpose of a fact sheet is to present information in a concise, easily consumable way, similar to the executive summary of a lengthy report. Most fact sheets also make use of a visual display of information, such as charts and graphs - you may include these graphics if you wish, it is not required. What is required in your fact sheet is the following sections:

1. **History section**, that discusses the development of the standard - how long has it been around; what groups of people, organizations, or research community developed the standard; what is the plan for ongoing updates?
2. **Descriptive section**, that describes the standard and its purpose - the type of resources it is to be used with
3. **Technical section**, with information about the tags or elements that the standard includes, how it's commonly encoded, is there software available or does it work with other commonly available software, how to work with or apply the standard; availability of user guides
4. **Implementation section**, with links to projects that are using the standard, and short descriptions (1 - 2 sentences) of how these implementers are using the standard.
5. **Supporting research section**, citations to at least two supporting sources, such as articles, book chapters, or websites, that document how the standard is being used; and how it was developed and the reasons it was established.

Once you have gathered your information, lay out your fact sheet as a 1-2 page document, using whatever software you prefer - MSWord or other word processing software is most likely the easiest. It would also be possible to layout the fact sheet in html, then display it in a web browser. Regardless of the software used to create the fact sheet, you'll need to save it as a .pdf to hand in. There are tons of fact sheet templates available on the Internet, primarily for use with Word or other word processing software. There are also examples - here's a .pdf of a fact sheet from the US Geological Survey.
For this assignment, please hand in your work as a .pdf - this will ensure that your formatting doesn't get messed up in the upload. On a Mac, you can save almost anything as a .pdf in the print menu, and save as .pdf is built into most versions of MSWord since 2010.

Free-Form Comment Rubric in Canvas

Metadata Fact Sheet

Criteria	Ratings	Pts
You identifed at least one or at the most two relevant standards to discuss	*This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.*	5.0 pts
History section	*This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.*	5.0 pts
Description section	*This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.*	5.0 pts
Technical section	*This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.*	5.0 pts
Implementation section	*This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.*	5.0 pts
Supporting research	*This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.*	5.0 pts
		Total Points: 30.0

Both students and instructors can benefit from having explicit evaluation criteria or rubrics for their writing and speaking assignments. This step-by-step guide will help you develop a rubric that you can use to clarify your expectations and supplement your individualized feedback.

Program in Writing Across the Curriculum UW-Madison

How to Build and Use Rubrics Effectively

Students really benefit from having instructors share explicit evaluation criteria along with the assignment instructions. These evaluation criteria or rubrics sometimes take the form of a simple list, and other times appear in an evaluation form that the instructor will use for giving feedback. For students, having rubrics not only demystifies how their work will be evaluated but also teaches what makes for a successful paper in response to that assignment, in that genre, and in that discipline. And as an instructor, you can also benefit from creating rubrics—they can help you clarify your priorities for student writing and can help you be more efficient and consistent as you evaluate students' work.

What rubrics look like varies a great deal: they can be simple or elaborate, fairly general or very specific, qualitative and quantitative. They can be in prose form or in a bulleted list or a grid. Different criteria can be weighted differently for grading purposes. The section on responding to and evaluating student writing in our WAC Faculty Sourcebook offers many possible examples of rubrics, which we would encourage you to use as models to follow or adapt as you develop your own rubrics.

Although rubrics are beneficial, on their own they do not constitute all the feedback that students need and deserve on substantial written work. Students need some individually tailored feedback. Remember too that the characteristics of successful papers articulated in a rubric seem to offer clarity and precision, but the truth is that all of the significant terms in evaluation criteria and rubrics require further explanation and interpretation. So we shouldn't expect rubrics to answer every question or solve all of the challenges we face in communicating with our students about our expectations.

Getting Started

Creating a rubric does not need to take much time. Here is some general advice for getting started:

1. Beyond a few basics, what makes for effective writing varies depending on the learning goals for the assignment, the genre of the paper, the subject matter, the specific tasks, the discipline, and the level of the course. So it's crucial to develop criteria that match the specific learning goals and the genre of your assignment. And what's valued in one discipline differs in others. For more information about the limits of broad, general evaluation rubrics, see Chris M. Anson, Deanna P. Dannels, Pamela Flash, and Amy L. Housley Gaffney, "Big Rubrics and Weird Genres: The Futility of Using Generic Assessment Tools Across Diverse Instructional Contexts," *The Journal of Writing Assessment* 5.1 (2012).
2. With each assignment, start by listing what characterizes a strong piece of student writing in response to that assignment.
3. Once you have a list of characteristics, try organizing them into a limited number of larger categories.
4. Order your list so that it starts with the quality of the content and ideas and analysis and arguments, then moves to organization and finally to grammar and careful editing and citation format.
5. If you are going to weight the items, try assigning relative percentages to the categories, making sure to have ideas and content and big-picture elements of the paper count for most of the points. There is a point of diminishing returns in having to make too many discrete evaluations.
6. Then decide whether you want to describe different levels of success on each item and whether you want to align that evaluation with points or grades (see the example below).
7. Once you have a draft rubric, share it with your students when you assign a paper and ask students to ask you questions about it—their questions should help you improve and clarify your expectations.
8. Creating a rubric is a recursive process. Once you start using it to help you evaluate actual student papers, you will soon discover things you forgot to include and you will inevitably change your mind about what matters most in successful papers.

One Example of a Rubric Matched to an Assignment

On the next page is a strong example of an assignment and rubric from a first-year history seminar. This rubric is closely aligned with the tasks in the assignment, emphasizes, in its organization, the key priorities in the assignment, and illustrates different levels of success.

EXHIBIT 6.3

McLeod's Assignment Handout for First-Year Seminar

One of the most prominent topics in the historiography of colonial Latin America has been the nature of the encounter between Amerindians and Europeans beginning in 1492. According to a recent review essay by historian Steve J. Stern, one of the three main paradigms or frameworks for interpreting the conquest has been that of the conquest as an "overwhelming avalanche of destruction," characterized by the military defeat and demographic collapse of indigenous populations, the brutal treatment and ruthless economic exploitation of surviving natives by rapacious conquistadors, and the forced disappearance of pre-Columbian cultural, political, and social ways. Based on your reading of Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatán, 1517–1570*, would you agree with this view of the conquest as one of extreme destruction and trauma? If so, why? If not, what is the best way to describe the nature of the encounter between Spaniards and Amerindians in colonial Latin America?

Using Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests*, as well as the other readings, lectures, and discussions we have had in this course, write a **4–6 page (typed, double-spaced, stapled) essay** answering the above question. The assignment is due **October 10**. Assume that you are writing an academic paper for an undergraduate conference on Latin America. Also assume that your audience has NOT read this assignment and will attend your conference session because your title hooked their interest. Your introduction should explain the problem-at-issue before presenting your thesis. Because this is an academic paper in history, follow the manuscript form of the *Chicago Manual of Style* and Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. I will grade your paper using the following rubric:

Introduction and Thesis Statement

10 9 8	7 6 5 4	3 2 1 0
Explains problem to be addressed; provides necessary background; ends with contestable thesis statement; thesis answers question	Problem statement missing; problem poorly focused; thesis unclear, not contestable, and/or does not fully answer question	Paper begins without context or background; paper lacks thesis statement; reader confused about what writer is attempting to do

Quality of ideas and argument

20 18 16	14 12 10 8	6 4 2 0
Strong insights; remains focused on question; effectively links course materials to question; good historical reasoning	Some good insights; loses focus on question or gaps in argument; connections between question and course materials vague; unsupported generalizations	Fails to adequately answer question; contains no clear argument; descriptive rather than analytical; tends to summarize course materials

Use of evidence

10 9 8	7 6 5 4	3 2 1 0
Excellent use of different course materials to support argument; effectively provides relevant examples, evidence, and appropriate quotes	Uneven use of evidence and examples; evidence not always directly relevant; over-reliance on a single source; significance of quotes not readily apparent	Lack of evidence and examples; evidence, if provided, not related to overall argument; limited reference to course materials

(Continued)

Sample rubric quoted from John Bean's *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*, 2nd edition (p. 101-102)

Organization and Clarity

10 9 8	7 6 5 4	3 2 1 0
Clear, well-organized paper; paragraphs begin with topic sentences related to thesis; topic sentences fully developed in each paragraph; paper flows logically, reader doesn't get lost	Generally sound organization; some topic sentences strong, others weak; some paragraphs not fully developed; reader occasionally confused by awkward organization, unclear sentences, fuzzy ideas	Poor organization, lacks clarity; paper not organized around coherent paragraphs; paragraphs lack topic sentences; prose is hard to follow and understand

Editing and Manuscript Form

10 9 8	7 6 5 4	3 2 1 0
Flawless paper, or an occasional minor error. Looks like a professional history paper; notes follow assigned format; contains an academic title.	Distractions due to spelling, punctuation, grammar errors; writer seems a bit careless. Varies from assigned style and format in a few ways; contains non-academic title.	Paper seriously marred by mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation; lack of editing. Paper does not follow assigned style and format; papers lacks a title.

For an excellent discussion and illustration of different types of rubrics, we recommend Chapter 14, "Using Rubrics to Develop and Apply Grading Criteria," in John Bean's *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*.

In this handout for his students, Professor Steve Kantrowitz explains the criteria he and his TAs use as they grade students' argumentative essays.

Professor Steve Kantrowitz
History

ESTABLISHING EXPLICIT GRADING CRITERIA

We will grade your papers on the following criteria:

1. STRUCTURE:

Begin your paper with a brief description of the narrative, or a brief episode from it that suggests or illustrates your thesis. Give your thesis statement, which is a concise statement of your central argument. Then build your argument in a series of well-structured paragraphs. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence, followed by 3 to 5 sentences that clearly support that topic sentence. Each paragraph should explain ONE idea, not three or four. Pay attention to transitions! Each paragraph should have a clear connection to the one preceding it. End with a strong conclusion that explains what your thesis tells us about the era of the Civil War.

2. ANALYSIS:

Remember that each paragraph should advance your argument. Support your thesis with evidence from your narrative, always remembering to explain what that evidence means. Where necessary, provide context from other course marterial, but don't lean too heavily on textbooks or lectures. Your analysis should offer specific insights into aspects of this history that other course materials describe in general terms; it may also suggest how your evidence challenges other historian's analyses. Without trying to make too broad a claim about the entire Civil War, show how your narrator's experience of change tells us something interesting and important about the era.

3. STYLE:

Don't try to write like a writer—write like a person who wants to be understood. Clarity comes from knowing what you mean and saying it plainly. We will reward clear, active, powerful writing. PLEASE do not use the passive voice. Do not start sentences with "It is. . .," "There is. . ." or "There are. . ." Use active verbs. Revise your paper to remove wordiness, redundancy, passive voice, and inactive verbs. Make sure that your grammar and spelling are correct. Careless errors, especially run-ons and comma splices, WILL lower your grade.

This is an example of WEAK writing: "There were changes in southern society during the war that made southerners turn their anti-government beliefs against the south."

This is an example of BETTER writing: "Many white southerners interpreted wartime taxation and conscription as the same sort of interference with southern 'domestic relations' that the Confederacy founders had promised to prevent."

What's the difference? In the first sentence, "There were changes" is vague and inactive. What sort of changes occurred, in what context, and why? Specificity and context are essential to good history. "Southerners" is too general; the group in question consists of many (but not all) white southerners. "Anti-government beliefs" and "the south" also lack precision. White southerners tended to resist some forms of political authority, but not others; this dynamic shaped both the Confederate state (which was not the same thing as "the south") and the emergence of opposition to that state's policies.

4. ORIGINALITY:

Although you can get a good grade (B) for a paper based on arguments presented in lectures or readings, "A" papers must offer more original insights and arguments. We strongly encourage you to think for yourselves, building on evidence and arguments from the course but pushing your insights further than what we cover in lectures.

The Superior Paper (A)

Structure: Your thesis is clear, insightful, original, sophisticated, even exciting. All ideas in the paper flow logically; your argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Your paragraphs have solid topic sentences, and each sentence in the paragraph clearly relates to that topic sentence. You provide excellent transitions. Your conclusion is persuasive.
Analysis: You support every point with at least one example from your sources. You integrate quoted material into your sentences well. Your analysis is fresh and exciting, offering new ways to think about the material.

Style: Your sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and citations are excellent. You have NO run-on sentences or comma splices. Your writing style is lively, active, and interesting. You use active verbs and do not use the passive voice. You are not wordy or redundant.
Originality: Your arguments show a great deal of independent insight and originality.

The Very Good Paper (AB)

Structure: Your thesis is clear, insightful, and original. Your argument flows logically and is sound. You may have a few unclear transitions. You end with a strong conclusion.
Analysis: You give examples to support most points, and you integrate quotations into sentences. Your analysis is clear and logical.
Style: Your sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and citations are good. You have no more than one run-on sentence or comma splice. Your writing style is solid and clear. You use active verbs and do not use the passive voice. You are not wordy or redundant.
Originality: Your arguments show independent thought.

The Good Paper (B)

Structure: Your thesis is clear, but may not be insightful or original; or it may be original and insightful but be weakly phrased or difficult to identify. Your argument is generally clear and appropriate, although it may wander occasionally. You may have a few unclear transitions, or paragraphs without strong topic sentences. You may end without much of a conclusion.
Analysis: You give evidence to support most points, but in some cases your evidence and your argument may not align well with one another. Your argument usually makes sense, but gaps in logic may exist.
Style: Your writing style is clear, but not always lively, active, or interesting. You sometimes use the passive voice. You may become wordy or redundant. Your sentence structure, grammar, and spelling are strong despite occasional lapses.
Originality: You do a solid job of synthesizing course material but do not develop your own insights or conclusions.

The Borderline Paper (BC)

Structure: Your thesis may be unclear, vague, or unoriginal, and/or it may provide little structure for the paper. Your paper may wander, with few transitions, few topic sentences, and little logic. Your paragraphs may not be organized coherently.
Analysis: Your paper exhibits several of the following weaknesses: you give examples to support some but not all points; your points often lack supporting evidence; you use evidence inappropriately, perhaps because you have not clarified what point you are seeking to make; your quotations may be poorly integrated into sentences; you may offer a quotation but fail to analyze it or show how it supports your argument; your logic may fail, or your argument may be unclear; your paper may dwindle off without a conclusion.
Style: Your writing style is not always clear, active, or interesting. You use the passive voice, or become wordy or redundant. You have repeated problems in sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, citation style, or spelling. You may have several run-on sentences or comma splices.
Originality: You do a fair job of synthesizing course material but do not develop your own insights or conclusions.

The "Needs Help" Paper (C)

Structure: Your thesis is difficult to identify, incorrect on its face, or a restatement of an obvious point. Your structure may be unclear, often because your thesis is weak or nonexistent. Your transitions are confusing and unclear. Your paragraphs show little structure. The paper is a loose collection of statements, rather than a cohesive argument.
Analysis: Your examples are few or weak. You fail to support statements, and the evidence you give is poorly analyzed, poorly integrated into the paper, or simply incorrect. Your argument may be impossible to identify. Ideas may not flow at all, often because there is no argument to support.
Style: Your writing style has problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. You have frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. You may have many run-on sentences and comma splices.
Originality: You do a confusing or poor job synthesizing material presented in lectures and sections, and you do not develop your own insights or conclusions.

The Bad Paper (D or F)

A bad paper shows minimal effort or poor comprehension. Its arguments are very difficult to understand owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and/or analysis. The paper has no identifiable thesis, or an incompetent thesis. It's difficult to tell that you've come to class.

Faculty in a large department work to communicate common writing goals to students, developing a sense of consistency across courses.

English Department

SHARED GOALS FOR PAPER WRITING ACROSS UNDERGRADUATE LITERATURE COURSES IN A LARGE DEPARTMENT

Students often complain that their grades on literature papers are “subjective,” and they struggle to please each professor, feeling as if every new class demands some arbitrary new set of criteria for good writing. But in fact professors tend to share eight crucial common goals for literary analysis essays, and although they may weigh them differently and use a range of words to describe these, most strongly agree on the features of a successful paper.

The English Department wants to be clear about these shared goals
*so that you can see how the English major helps you to develop a core group of essential writing skills
*so that you can track your progress as a writer, identifying the specific skills you need to improve
*so that you can gain writing skills that will be useful to you after you graduate

Shared core value	What professors say they want…	Why it matters
Originality	They ask for *originality, inventiveness, independence*, or *newness* in your insights, claims, or analysis; or they expect you to *advance an argument*, *show something new*, or *illuminate a problem*.	You’re not really thinking when you passively receive information. To think you need to digest the material yourself and come up with your own thoughts about it. Offering new ideas is a crucial skill in all professional fields.
Analytical thinking	They ask for *analysis*, not summary; they expect you to show how a work of literature *operates*, how it addresses a theme, idea, or question that is not obvious, or how *different elements of a text work together* to create subtle *patterns* or *connections*; you may be asked to *make observations* and *distinctions*, point to *connections* among images or details; and *assemble* a new sense of the whole.	In English classes, you are asked to think about language—and especially about how and why language is persuasive. Practice in rigorous analytical thinking provides you with a strong groundwork for understanding the power that words have over you and others—a power put to both good and bad uses in politics, in the workplace, and in personal relationships.
Persuasiveness	They ask for *evidence* or *support for your claims*; they expect you to make arguments that don’t just work on a gut level for you, but are persuasive to others.	Persuading others by expertly deploying powerful evidence is a skill which you’ll need in just about any profession, and it is one of the most crucial skills for leadership.
Significance	They ask you to show *how and why your claims matter*; to answer the “*so what?*” question, to *draw conclusions*, or to address the *significance* or *payoff* of your claims.	Convincing others of the significance of your ideas is what prompts them to take you seriously and to welcome your contributions as important.
Organization	They ask for *organized* or *well-structured* papers; they may expect you to pay attention to the *sequence* or *flow* of your argument; to focus on the *development of ideas* in the essay or to create *logical transitions* between paragraphs; and to work on a *thesis* that introduces and gathers together your major ideas.	Integrating multiple ideas into a coherent, overarching argument involves some of the highest levels of thought human beings are capable of: using and creating concepts to bring together thoughts and developing a logical set of relations among distinct ideas.
Facility with style	They ask for *clarity*, *fluency* or *precision; lucid* or *intelligible* sentences; *well-turned* or *elegant* prose; or an *engaging* or *varied* style. You may be warned away from vagueness and awkwardness and asked to make every effort at *polish*, *verve*, or *liveliness*.	Anyone who has ever waded through a dull textbook or angry rant knows that style can make all the difference. But there is no single style that works for all occasions. To become a good writer you need to develop flexibility of style and a sense of audience.
Citation of sources	They ask for *bibliographies* or *works cited*, *sources* or *citations*.	You must do your own work and honor others for theirs. Plagiarism is a serious offense.
Polished presentation	They ask for writing free of grammatical errors and typos.	Employers will always want carefully edited, professional-looking writing.

This excerpt from the Biocore program's Writing Manual details the writing process and the kinds of feedback students will receive on their work. Note the balance between highly specific and "Big Picture" criteria.

Dr. Michelle Harris
Dr. Janet Batzli
Biocore

USING RUBRICS TO TEACH AND EVALUATE WRITING IN BIOLOGY

Receiving Feedback. Writing is a process and even very experienced writers spend a lot of time rewriting. Your TAs will give you feedback and suggestions on your papers to help you in this process. Note, however, that it is not their responsibility to point out every flaw or to revise your papers for you. Revising is your responsibility. It pays to keep working at this. The feedback we get from Biocore students years later is that one of the most valuable things they learned in Biocore was clear thinking and writing. The two are very connected.

The Big Picture. TA comments (and your grade) will focus much more on "The Big Picture" than on editing details. Here is what we mean by "big picture". In evaluating your papers, the TAs ask:

1. Did the Introduction convey why the experiment was performed and what it was designed to test?
2. Did the Methods clearly describe how the hypothesis was tested/ general predictions were addressed?
3. Did the Results clearly and effectively display relevant data?
4. Did the Discussion present conclusions that make sense based on the data?

As TAs and instructional staff are reviewing papers, we constantly refer to these same four points when making final decisions about individual grades. Review expectations outlined in the Paper and Proposal Rubrics BEFORE you start writing your paper!

Paper and Proposal Rubrics. All Biocore TAs use a detailed rubric to assess each section of your paper on a 1-4 scale. We use this rubric to clearly state our expectations for your writing. The paper and proposal rubrics are found on the following pages; you should refer to them before, during and after writing your paper and whenever your graded papers are returned. Note that the four "Big Picture" questions are embedded within the rubric, and the final row of the rubric focuses on overall organization, grammar, and wording. The goal is for you to use your TA's written comments in tandem with your rubric ratings to improve your writing on subsequent revisions or new assignments.

Biocore Lab Paper Review Rubric (WM = Biocore Writing Manual)

	0 = inadequate (C, D or F)	**1 =adequate (BC)**	**2 = good (B)**	**3 = very good (AB)**	**4 = excellent (A)**
Title	Point of experiment cannot be determined by title	Has two or more problems comparable to the following: Title is not concise, point of experiment is difficult to determine by title, most key information is missing	Title could be more concise but still conveys main point of experiment; 2 or more key components are missing	Title is concise & conveys main point of experiment but 1 key component is missing	Title is concise, conveys main point of experiment, and includes these key components: study system, variables, result, & direction. [With systematic observations, results may be too preliminary to define direction so title should be more general.]
Abstract	Abstract is missing or, if present, provides no relevant information.	Many key components are missing; those stated are unclear and/or are not stated concisely.	Covers all but 2 key components and/or could be done more clearly and/or concisely.	Concisely & clearly covers all but one key component OR clearly covers all key components but could be more concise and/or clear.	Concisely & clearly covers all key components in 200 words or less: biological rationale, hypothesis, approach, result direction & conclusions
Introduction ***BIG PICTURE: Did Intro convey why experiment was performed and what is was designed to test?***	4-5 key components are very weak or missing; those stated are unclear and/or not stated concisely. Weak/missing components make it difficult to follow the rest of the paper. Often results in hypothesis that "comes out of nowhere."	Covers all but 3 key components & could be more concise and/or clear. **OR** clearly covers all but 2 key components but could be done much more logically, clearly, and/or concisely. *e.g.,* background information is not focused on a specific question and minimal biological rationale is presented such that hypothesis isn't entirely logical	Covers all but 2 key components **OR** clearly covers all but 1 key component but could be done much more logically, clearly, and/or concisely. *e.g.,* biological rationale not fully developed but still supports hypothesis. Remaining components are done reasonably well, though there is still room for improvement. Includes information that is extraneous and detracting from the main ideas.	Concisely & clearly covers all but one key component (w/ exception of rationale) **OR** clearly covers all key components but could be more concise and/or clear. *e.g.,* has done a reasonably nice job with the Intro but fails to state the approach **OR** has done a nice job with Intro but has also included some irrelevant background information	Clearly, concisely, & logically presents all key components: relevant & correctly cited background information, question, biological rationale (including biological assumptions about how the system works), hypothesis, approach. (There may be a few minor issues with organization/clarity.)

(Rubric continued on following page…)

	0 = inadequate (C, D or F)	1 =adequate (BC)	2 = good (B)	3 = very good (AB)	4 = excellent (A)
Methods & Materials ***BIG PICTURE: Did Methods clearly describe how hypothesis was tested?***	So little information is presented that reader could not possibly replicate experiment **OR** methods are entirely inappropriate to test hypothesis	Procedure is presented such that a reader could replicate experiment **but** methods are largely inappropriate to test hypothesis **OR** Procedure is presented such that a reader could replicate experiment only after learning several more key details**.**	Procedure is presented such that a reader could replicate experiment only after learning a few more key details **OR** methods used are reasonably appropriate for study, though a more straight-forward approach may have been taken.	Concisely, clearly, & chronologically describes procedure used so that reader could replicate *most* of experiment with the exception of a few relatively minor details. Methods used are appropriate for study. Minor problems with organization OR some irrelevant/ superfluous information.	Concisely, clearly, & chronologically describes procedure used so that knowledgeable reader could replicate experiment. Methods used are appropriate for study. Clearly defines controls and how they will inform the experiment. Briefly describes mathematical manipulations or statistical analyses.
Results ***BIG PICTURE: Did the Results clearly & effectively display relevant data?***	Major problems that leave reader uninformed; narrative text is lacking entirely, tables & figures contain unclear and/or irrelevant information. *e.g.,* "Results" contain no text, raw data are in a table w/ poor legend.	Has 3-5 problems comparable to the following: narrative text and & tables/figures are minimal and mostly uninformative, some relevant data are present but are mixed in with much unnecessary information, trends are not immediately apparent in figures and are not explicitly noted in text, tables & figures lack legends, variation around mean values is not indicated in either text or figures, conclusions about hypothesis are emphasized.	Has presented findings with a reasonably good narrative text & informative tables/figures, but has 2-3 problems comparable to the following: most relevant data are present but are mixed in with some unnecessary information, trends are shown in figures but are not explicitly noted, tables & figures have very brief legends that leave out key details, variation around mean values is not indicated in figures, conclusions about hypothesis are briefly made.	Has presented both a concise, narrative text & informative tables/figures without biological interpretation, but has made 1-2 minor omissions or has other relatively small problems. *e.g.,* relevant data & trends are summarized well and without biological interpretation, but tables & figures have very brief legends that leave out some key details.	With a few minor exceptions, contains a concise, well-organized narrative text & tables/figures that highlight key trends/ patterns/output from statistical tests without biological interpretation. Tables & figures have appropriate legends/ labels & can stand on their own. If you have problems collecting valid data, state what the problem was that makes your data invalid.
Discussion ***BIG PICTURE Did the Discussion present conclusions that made sense based on the data?***	4 or more key components are missing or very weakly done. *e.g.,* illogical conclusions made based on data, no ties to biological rationale are made, no literature cited, little to no evaluation of experimental design/data.	Covers all but 3 key components & could be more concise and/or clear. **OR** clearly covers all but 2 key components but could be done much more logically, clearly, and/or concisely. *e.g.,* fails to explicitly reject or support hypothesis and so conclusions are vague and incompletely tied to rationale, literature is minimally cited, presents unranked laundry list of problems instead of logical evaluation of design and data, suggests flashy new experiments that would not clearly shed light on current question.	Covers all but 2 key components **OR** clearly covers all but 1 key component but could be done much more logically, clearly, and/or concisely *e.g.,* clearly states that hypothesis is rejected or supported and develops a good argument that refers to biological rationale, but fails to logically and objectively evaluate assumptions and the experimental design and data reliability. Remaining components are done reasonably well, though there is still room for improvement.	Concisely & clearly covers all but one key component **OR** clearly covers all key components but could be more concise and/or clear. *e.g.,* has done a reasonably nice job with the Discussion but fails to clearly tie biological rationale from the Intro into the conclusions made **OR** has done a nice job with the Discussion but has also included an extensive laundry list of experimental problems without discussing their impact on the conclusions. *e.g.*, lacks a discussion of assumptions.	With a few minor exceptions, clearly, concisely, & logically presents all key components: supports or rejects hypothesis*, formulates argument for conclusions referring back to biological rationale & by comparing with relevant findings in literature, evaluates experimental design, evaluates reliability of data, states implications of results, suggests next investigation steps, and ends paper with final conclusion. Evaluate the extent to which biological and mechanical assumptions were met. *If you believe error occurred, describe what you believe happened and discuss how this impacts your ability to make conclusions about hypothesis.
Literature Cited	Background information is presented but is consistently not cited; final citation list is missing	Very few references are cited in text of paper; final citation list is largely incomplete and/or is not formatted appropriately.	References within body of paper & references in final citation list are done appropriately for the most part, but there are consistent exceptions. *e.g.,* citations are used sparingly throughout the paper when background information is presented OR there are consistent formatting errors in text and final citation list.	References within body of paper are cited appropriately; references in final citation list are formatted appropriately and listed alphabetically by author using WM guidelines, but there are 1-2 exceptions. *e.g.,* citations are done well except that one or two references listed in text do not appear in the final list OR there are a few minor formatting errors in the final citation list.	References within body of paper are cited appropriately; references in final citation list are formatted appropriately and listed alphabetically by author using WM guidelines.
Overall grammar, organization, wording	All poorly organized, interrupted flow to ideas leading to lack of clarity, cannot follow thought progression, many grammatical errors	Problematic organization of some section resulting in loss of clarity; awkward wording at times; some grammatical errors	Organization somewhat problematic but can still follow thought progression *e.g.* explanation of methods in the results section; wording awkward at times, some grammatical errors.	Organization was good with few to no problems, wording awkward in a few places, few grammatical errors	Excellent organization and paper flow, appropriate word choice, few to no grammatical errors

The following rubric guides students' writing process by making explicit the conventions for a research proposal. It also leaves room for the instructor to comment on each particular section of the proposal.

Matthew Pearson
Writing Across the Curriculum

RUBRIC FOR A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Essentials	Comments
Clear introduction or abstract (your choice), introducing the purpose, scope, and method of your project.	
Literature review—six quality scholarly sources; clearly summarized; connection to your proposed research clear.	
Significance of topic Statement of problem—gap in knowledge about the topic; hypothesis if appropriate.	
Proposal of how your study will help fill the gap—what new knowledge it might provide.	
Clear methods section—description of measurements, tools for measurement, reasons for choosing tools, sample, reasons for sample choice.	
Organization and logical progression of ideas at the paragraph and whole-paper levels.	
Correct use of whatever citation style you choose (APA, MLA, ABA, Chicago…).	
Style/language—clear actors as subjects of your sentences; active voice when appropriate.	
Style/language—concision and cohesion between sentences and paragraphs.	
Style/language—elegant use of tropes and schemes, when appropriate.	
Careful editing/proofing.	

Your Grade (20% of final course grade):

This evaluation checklist, combined with the following "Notes on Grading Criteria," provides students with concrete feedback on their writing in a way that minimizes the need for the instructor to repeat lengthy comments from essay to essay. Such sheets can be tailored to a variety of writing situations in any course.

Jocelyn Johnson
Philosophy

EVALUATION SHEET IN PHILOSOPHY

Name:______________________________ Topic:____

	Poor	OK	Good	Very Good	Outstanding
1. Well-Defined Thesis					
2. Logic and Development of the Argument					
3. Originality of Ideas					
4. Serious Consideration of Counter-Arguments					
5. Well-Informed (incorporates relevant readings and conceptual distinctions)					
6. Reflects Solid Understanding of Readings					
7. Writing Style (clarity, flow, transitions, etc.)					
8. Grammar, Paragraph and Sentence Structure					

Comments:

Notes on Grading Criteria for Essays

What follows is a clarification of some of the criteria for essays that are listed on the previous page. Not all the criteria are addressed. If you have questions about those that aren't discussed or about the following, please ask.

Well-Defined Thesis. The thesis of your essay is the conclusion of the argument that you will develop. Not formulating the thesis statement precisely is one of the most common mistakes of an essay. Although it is not necessary, I strongly advise you to place the thesis statement in the first paragraph of your essay; I will also ask you to indicate the thesis of your essay by underlining or italicizing it. After writing a draft of your essay, go back to your thesis statement to check whether what you intended to argue is what you did in fact argue.

Examples of unacceptably vague—but all-too-common—thesis statements are as follows:

"In this paper I will discuss and criticize X's article."
or
"I will argue that euthanasia is morally permissible in some situations."

Neither of these tells the reader what your essay is about except, in the first example, that you will discuss X's article, and, in the second, that you will discuss euthanasia. Better thesis statements are:

"I will show that X's argument is invalid because s/he fails to make the distinction between *doing* something and *allowing* it to happen."
or
"I will argue that neither active nor passive euthanasia is acceptable because both violate human dignity."

For an example of an introduction which I think is especially good, see Martin Perlmutter's introduction to "Desert and Capital Punishment" in *Morality and Moral Controversies*, pp. 390-1. His introduction is much longer than one for a five page essay, but I think the last paragraph of his introductory section is a good model for a shorter introduction.

Originality of Ideas. It is not expected that your essay will involve insights that no philosopher has ever had (nor is it expected that this is an impossibility). However, you are expected to think about these issues for yourself and not merely summarize points that have been made in the readings or class. It is fine to mention the arguments that have been made, and sometimes important to do so, but your essay should go beyond this. This is usually easiest if you disagree with the argument that someone has made. However, even if you think some author got things exactly right, there are ways to make your essay original. For example you could discuss good objections (perhaps from other readings or lectures) that the author hadn't considered and argue that those objections don't work. Or you could apply the style of argument that you find correct to an aspect of an issue that the author didn't discuss. For example, if someone argued that marijuana should be legalized for reason X, you could argue that the same reason does (or doesn't) work when considering other drugs.

Well-Informed. As mentioned above, your essay should not be a mere summary of readings or lectures. However, if there are arguments, distinctions, etc., which are relevant to your argument but your essay demonstrates no awareness of this, the essay will be marked down.

Serious Consideration of Counterarguments. This is a fairly basic requirement of any philosophical writing, and you will surely see it often in the course readings. Many who are new to philosophy find this confusing because it seems that the author is arguing both for and against the same position. However, it is considered a virtue of philosophical writing if you can anticipate objections to your view, present them as strong counterarguments, and provide convincing responses. You won't be expected to come up with obscure counter-arguments, but you are expected to address convictions against your position that have been raised in readings or lectures that are fairly obvious. An essay shows more intellectual integrity, and will receive a higher grade, if it raises a serious objection which cannot be answered than if it ignores serious objections altogether.

Below are two examples of rubrics from Professor Katy Culver's intermediate journalism course, where she covers a range of genres. By using rubrics to establish unique grading criteria for each assignment, she teaches her students the similarities and differences between them.

Professor Katy Culver
Journalism 202

SAMPLE RUBRICS FROM A JOURNALISM COURSE

Informative Story

Graded requirements	**Subsets**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Mastering**
	Scale	C-F	B-BC	A-AB
Information	Accuracy, inclusiveness, completeness, use of sources/ evidence/quotes	Holes in information; important sources left out; unquestioning use of sources; no or weak quotes; unfounded opinion; inaccuracies (-10 per fact error)	Reasonable use of information but some ideas left out; minor inaccuracies; quotes used but weak connection or construction	Well-rounded sourcing includes key ideas/facts; effective quotes advance story; accurate; tells complete story
	Scale	F________________________A		
Lead	Fit to story, concision, engagement, appropriate tone	Lead misses point of story or is buried; wordy; inappropriate for audience; unnecessarily passive; inaccurate	Lead has one or two strong elements but fails in others, e.g. hits correct point but is excessively wordy	Lead accurately and succinctly draws in audience with key idea (straight) or engaging elements (feature)
	Scale	F________________________A		
Structure and flow	Organization, transitions, readability	Structure does not lead logically from one point to next; no or poor transitions; leaps in ideas with no segues; piece feels choppy or confusing	Information generally well ordered with some confusing jumps; weaker transitions; readable but inconsistent in flow	Information flows seamlessly from one point to next; effective transitions of idea and language; appropriate length for story, medium and audience
	Scale	F________________________A		
Language	Active voice, effective modifiers, precise word choices, visual descriptions, clarity, concision	Wordy constructions; poor word choices; unnecessary passive voice; unclear statements; dull writing	Clear writing with some instances of poor word choice, unspecific descriptions or passive voice; slightly wordy or confusing	Concise constructions making use of precise and effective words; descriptive and clear
	Scale	F________________________A		
Mechanics	Spelling, style, grammar	Host of errors interfere with comprehension	Minor errors trip up reader but story readable	Largely error-free
	Scale	F________________________A		
Fairness	Inclusiveness, balance	Displays unjustifiable bias; relies on stereotype; involves unwarranted opinion	Source or quote choices lead to question of bias; minor insertions of opinion	Overall fairness to subject and sources; free of bias
	Scale	F________________________A		
Assignment Grade:				

Audio Slideshow

Graded requirements	**Subsets**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Mastering**
	Scale	C-F	B-BC	A-AB
Theme/angle	Coherent and important story	Slideshow tells no story	Slideshow narrowing in on angle but images/captions/ backing audio miss the point	Theme/angle clear and images/captions/backing audio fulfill the promise
	Scale	F____A		
Images	Quality, composition, integration into story, focus, lighting	Images lack connection to story/theme; poor quality, composition, focus, lighting; too many/few images	Average quality, composition, focus and lighting; slightly too many/few images; solid connection to story/theme	Clear connection between images and story/theme; strong quality, composition, focus, lighting
	Scale	F____A		
Backing audio	Clarity, sound quality, connection to theme/angle, information	Interviews or other content not audible; little to no information provided; no added value; music only	Audio provides some content but doesn't meet theme or match images; some technical difficulties in recording	Audio adds markedly to comprehension/engagement of story; strong match to images
	Scale	F____A		
Captions	Fit to images, accuracy, concision	Wordy captions difficult to comprehend in slide time; inaccuracies (-10 for fact error)	Captions wordy but still digestible in slide time; repetitive with image; omit info	Captions easily comprehended in slide time; clear and active writing; add to content of image, rather than repeating
	Scale	F____A		
Structure and flow	Visual transitions, overall structure tells a story	Structure does not lead logically from one point to next; no or poor transitions; leaps in ideas with no segues; piece feels choppy or confusing	Information generally well ordered with some confusing jumps; weaker transitions; engaging but inconsistent in flow	Piece flows seamlessly from one image to next; effective transitions; strong feel to lead and conclusion
	Scale	F____A		
Language (captions and VO in backing audio)	Active voice, effective modifiers, precise word choices, match to visuals, clarity, concision	Wordy constructions; poor word choices; unnecessary passive voice; unclear statements; dull writing; text conflicts with visuals	Clear writing with some instances of poor word choice, etc.; slightly wordy or confusing; text ignores visuals	Concise constructions making use of precise and effective words; descriptive and clear; text matches visuals
	Scale	F____A		
Mechanics	Spelling, style, grammar	Host of errors interfere with comprehension	Minor errors trip up viewer but story comprehensible	Largely error-free
	Scale	F____A		
Timing	Total time meets assignment, tight bites/ other elements	Lead excessively long; runs short/long (-5 points after 5 seconds short/long); wordy	Meets overall length but internal elements run long, such as wordy bites	Meets overall length and tight elements throughout
	Scale	F____A		
Fairness	Inclusiveness, balance	Displays unjustifiable bias; relies on stereotype; involves unwarranted opinion	Source or quote choices lead to question of bias; minor insertions of opinion	Overall fairness to subject and sources; free of bias
	Scale	F____A		
Assignment Grade:				

Dr. Elise Gold uses checklists like these to give feedback to her students at multiple points in the writing process and to provide responses to students' peer reviewing. Below are her feedback checklists for a final draft of a writing assignment.

Dr. Elise Gold
Engineering

GRADING CHECKLISTS FOR A SEQUENCED ASSIGNMENT IN ENGINEERING

Paper 2: Proposal/Annotated Bibliography

AUTHOR: ___________________________________

Below you will find the various elements on which your paper will be evaluated. The Y (Yes), S (Somewhat), or N (No) by each item indicates how well you have done with each element. Items specifically needing work may be underlined or highlighted. Along with a grade, an overall evaluation follows, with a few major suggestions for improvement.

Cover Letter

____ explains purpose, focus, audience, use of logos, pathos, ethos
____ discusses what's working best and worst in draft
____ discusses what's new for the writer
____ describes substantive revisions made between drafts
____ uses appropriate tone

Title

____ accurately reflects paper
____ is catchy

Introduction

____ grabs reader's attention
____ sets stage and tone for paper
____ presents good research focus question, conveys significance of topic, previews controversy/debate

Thesis/Concluding Statement

____ has effective specific thesis/concluding statement

Development

____ effectively conveys why research topic is worth investigating
____ discusses major topic areas well as personal interest, interest to class, synopsis of opinion, research plan
____ avoids arguing a position to survey range of views
____ provides good supportive evidence and details, using sources, and discusses their significance rather than merely reports them
____ avoids redundancy in points, examples, etc.

Structure

____ uses good organizational strategies (follows through on proposal structure, organizes section discussions, especially opinions, well)
____ has unified paragraphs with effective topic sentences
____ has clear logic/coherence within/between paragraphs/sections; uses effective transitions (not mechanical) between/within paragraphs

Conclusion

____ recaps proposal effectively without repeating introduction
____ is interesting and places issue in large context
____ leaves reader with lasting impression about importance of research topic

Audience

____ clearly identifies audiences and their knowledge, values, and needs; uses appeals to logos, pathos, and ethos well.

Selection/Use/Citation of Sources and Annotated Bibliography

____ has adequate number of well selected sources (have currency, depth, range of views, credibility)
____ uses sources well to build/support argument not over-relying on them to form a pastiche; includes good, well-incorporated quotations, paraphrases, and summaries without plagiarism or inaccuracies
____ provides correct APA in-text citations avoiding problems like info attributed to wrong source, info listed but no citation, incorrect page cited, no quotation marks around a direct quotation, etc.
____ includes full, correct APA references to sources at end of paper
____ has clear and developed annotations that summarize, evaluate the bias, and explain sources' usefulness

Style/Sentences

____ employs variety in sentence structure and length
____ achieves clarity and economy of language by avoiding wordiness, word choice problems, passive voice, nominalizations, jargon and technical language, clichés
____ has appropriate and consistent tone

Mechanics

____ has relatively few problems with punctuation, grammar, spelling; has proofread carefully

Format

_____ follows manuscript guidelines well (i.e., for title, spacing, typeface, pagination, headings for proposal format, etc.)

Revision

_____ demonstrates good/excellent substantive revision between drafts on various levels—thesis and subordinate ideas, development and support, organization and logic, style and mechanics

GRADE: _________ **(Points lost for late and/or incomplete rough draft or final draft, missing cover letter, missing/incomplete mechanics checklist; annotated bibliography, in-text citations, and/or reference list missing or incomplete; copies of sources missing, not highlighted, or not cross-referenced; sources used inaccurately, evidence of plagiarism? ________)**

OVERALL EVALUATION:

PAPER 2 CRITIQUES OF PEERS' WORK
_____ provided well developed, substantive reviews of peers' writing
_____ identified critical areas to work (higher-level writing issues like thesis, organization, support, development, etc., rather than lower-level writing issues like style, mechanics, proofreading)
_____ included specific suggestions for improvement
_____ included careful marginal comments
_____ addressed peers directly with appropriate tone
_____ provided positive as well as constructive feedback

GRADE: _________ **(Points lost for late or missing first draft, for not participating in peer review workshops?)____**

These end comments on a first and final draft of a thesis-driven, 50-word student essay demonstrate how an instructor can highlight strengths and areas for improvement from one draft to the next.

Professor Charles Cohen
Department of History

Sample Comments on a Paper in an Upper-Level American History Course

Assignment: Taking into account Amerindian and Anglo-American notions of "property" and "possession," explain how contests over land and landholding affected the early settlement of Virginia and Massachusetts.

On the first version

At its best, this paper makes some very informed statements, such as your discussion of land possession on p. 2. You've also tried the ambitious task of explaining factors contributing to the development of early Virginia and Massachusetts. Understanding English and Amerindian conceptions of property can be brought to bear on the larger question of colonial development, but the two topics are not identical, and you don't always fit them together easily. Numerous statements, as the marginal comments indicate, are unclear. I like your attempt to grasp the greater intricacies of writing history, evident in your discussion of multiple factors and in your appreciation of contingency (p. 5), although I don't think the latter discussion particularly helpful in this form: many things might have occurred if what did happen did not happen, but since the hypothetical events did not occur, and since we can't possibly know what might have happened anyway, there seems little point in trying to reconstruct alternative possibilities. Put another way, you have some good instincts for writing history that experience will help you refine.
B

On the revised version of the same student's paper (shown below the comment)

You're substantially improved the paper, weeding out extraneous arguments, clarifying previously unclear statements, and even adding new material. You've developed a powerful thesis statement, and have directed your material towards supporting it, although occasionally, as noted, you weaken the focus. You make a few questionable statements: using "Virginia" and "Massachusetts" by themselves as examples of English settlement on "barren" lands is too vague (and inexact, since the English quickly learned that Jamestown was located in the midst of numerous tribes); and I doubt that fortification had the importance you attribute to it. You might also have said a bit more about what constituted the British sense of superiority. On the whole, however, you have greatly improved a paper that already had some real virtues.
A-

FACTORS INFLUENCING AMERINDIAN AND ENGLISH RELATIONS DURING THE COLONIZATION OF VIRGINIA AND MASSACHUSETTS

In general, events in history ~~are the~~ result~~-of~~ several contributing factors. An example of such an event can be found in the early race relations of the "New World." Misunderstandings between the Amerindians and the English resulted in mistrust and eventual hatred. The infamous relations between the Amerindians and the English during the colonization of Virginia and Massachusetts resulted from a combination of differing ideologies concerning land possession, English notions of superiority, and the actions of the leaders on both sides.

In this excerpt from an undergraduate experimental report in Biocore, instructor Jen Kaiser comments on the paper and praises student ideas while pointing out areas for improvement, asking questions for students to consider, and making suggestions for revising content and organization.

Jen Kaiser
Biocore

Sample Written Comments on a Student Paper

15

develop a more enhanced image of water stress induced regulation of stomata aperture. It can be envisioned that a plant well supplied with water will maintain the pH of fluids surrounding stomata at or near 7.0. When environmental conditions shift and the availability of water becomes limited, the now-stressed root system is stimulated to increase xylem pH (Davies *et al.* 1994) by as much as a magnitude of ten. This now alkaline pH stimulates the release of ABA from the leaf's mesophyll to the apoplast, which close the stomata and rescue the plant from a potentially lethal desiccation scenario. Despite the relative confidence held in this understanding, uncertainties surrounding this model of stomata aperture regulation do exist.

Ah! This is a clearer explanation of what's happening

So is it that pH 8 then opens stomata or keeps them open? There's a key difference there. It still isn't clear how pH → opening or how ABA works in the system

The alternative results discussed previously would show that the emersion of isolated epidermal tissue in PBS adjusted to pH 8.0 is not sufficient to open stomata. This would seem to suggest that stomata aperture is regulated by a mechanism that differs somewhat from the biological rationale. Rather than maintaining the open conformation of stomata up to pH 8.0, followed by stimulation of endogenous ABA release, alternative data would implicate alkaline pH in playing a role in only the later event. Other than at the most extreme end of the pH spectrum, the primary function of increased alkalinity would be to stimulate the translocation of ABA from leaf mesophyll to apoplast. Flowing this event ABA would then be free to interact with transmembrane receptors in the guard cells, triggering stomata closure. Before refuting the expected results and biological rationale (as suggested by data) in favor of this alternative explanation, careful consideration of the experimental methodology is necessary. Any sources?

which is what?

So: ↑pH → ↑ABA → closed stomata? Whereas the expected is ↑pH → open stomata before ABA is released? Or despite it being released?

The methods described in this proposal (including reagents, etc.) were designed follow, and therefore test the protocol and replicability of, the experimental results published by Davies and Wilkinson. The findings of this paper were seminal in the formulation of this proposal's study question and biological rationale. The plant species used in this study, *Zebrina pendula*, belongs to the family *Commelinaceae* (NCBI, 2010) which also includes *Commelina communis* the plant species used in the experiments performed by Davies and Wilkinson. Because these species share a relatively recent common ancestor it is quite likely that the two will share similar physiological characteristics. As mentioned in the introduction, the regulation of stomata conformation is vital to achieving a regulatory equilibrium between water management and biosynthetic needs. Therefore the genes encoding these traits are likely to be highly conserved across plant species. The phylogenetic proximity of *Z. pendula* and *C. communis* serve to further support such a possibility. Anatomical evaluation of the two species also seems to indicate that

A 5

DD, BC

this is an interesting + important concept! More on this in the intro would strengthen your rationale

our study, which would bring the sarcomere length past its threshold of force efficiency. Resting sarcomere length in human skeletal muscle is 2 micrometers (Bray *et al.* 1999). Rassier, Macintosh, and Herzog, in their studies on sarcomere force-length relationship, discovered that the relationship between sarcomere length and force able to be generated is not linear (Figure 5).

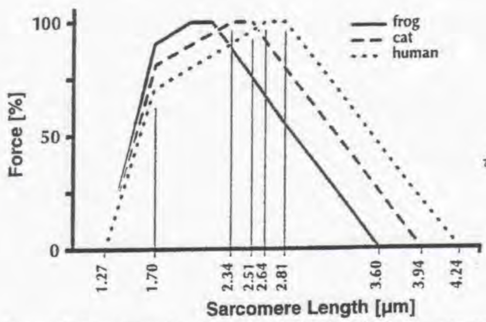


Figure 5. Sarcomere force-length relationship in frogs, cats, and humans (Rassier *et al.* 1999).

← great idea to include this graph. This info would fit better in the intro. That way you can reference it here instead of bringing in new concepts.

After the sarcomere exceeds 2.81 micrometers in humans, the force generated decreases linearly (Rassier *et al.* 1999). Therefore, if the muscle becomes too stretched in our study, more muscle fibers will need to be recruited. The overstretching brings the muscle back down to its

right! Unpack this a little more physiologically

efficiency at resting sarcomere length so no change would be noticed in this experiment. The muscle could also become stretched enough where its efficiency is lower than resting sarcomere length efficiency, increasing the electrical activity of the muscle. This is a really interesting assumption – since you can't directly measure length, what are some other considerations for your study? Are there other assumptions you're making?

The goal of this research is to discover a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between stretching and electrical activity. If our experimental data coincide with our hypothesis, some broader conclusions could be drawn. Different intensities of stretching could be applied to certain skeletal muscles and the corresponding electrical activity during exercise could be measured. The threshold of efficiency for each skeletal muscle of the body could be determined by looking for the point where electrical activity begins to increase again after decreasing to a

A 8

Professor Caitilyn Allen from the Plant Pathology department demonstrates how a grading sheet can help keep instructor comments focused and relatively brief, but still helpful for the student

Professor Caitilyn Allen
Plant Pathology

USING A FORM TO GUIDE INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK IN PLANT PATHOLOGY

WS 530 Biology & Gender
Term Paper Comments

Name:

Paper Topic: Occupational Hazards + Reproduction

1. Understanding of problem

Good, thoughtful analysis of a pretty complex literature. You ~~summarize~~ accurately and clearly, pointing out difficulties with various papers in an incisive + constructive way.

2. Thoroughness of Research

Zhang's paper sounds like a very problematic approach to this ~~literature~~ problem; & is it widely cited? That would be a bad sign about this work in general.

3. Analysis
clarity

originality

Clearly stated + well thought-out. It might have been useful to show that these were typical papers, or widely-cited ones (not merely straw men)

4. Writing
organization

logical and well-written

clarity

grammar, usage

need to ~~proofread~~ more carefully – many minor errors

5. Overall grade:

A good job

75

WS 530 Biology & Gender
Term Paper Comments

Name:

Paper Topic: Heart Disease + ♀

1. Understanding of problem

Paper doesn't show much that's not been discussed in class. There are some significant factors that you don't address like the role of estrogen, stress levels in ♂ + ♀, ERT

2. Thoroughness of Research

You ~~cite~~ list some interesting-looking pop press articles but do not explore them in any detail and do not cite them in your text – a real pity. The question would be: does the scientific data support USA Today's assertion that working has lead to ↑ heart attacks for ♀?

3. Analysis
clarity

originality Again, many points already made in class + in assigned readings.

4. Writing
organization Paper generally v. short and thin on content

clarity

grammar, usage problems with writing mechanics: awkward sentences, grammar errors. Need to proofread more carefully, spell-check.

5. Overall grade:

BC

Professor Jim Raymo responds to electronic versions of his students' papers, using the comment function in Microsoft Word. Note how engaged he is with the substance of his student's research, how effectively he uses questions to guide and to deepen thinking, and how effectively he blends encouragement with criticism and advice.

Professor Jim Raymo
Sociology

ELECTRONIC COMMENTS ON A STUDENT PAPER IN SOCIOLOGY

The Changing Density and Structure of Religious Switching Across the Life-Course

Comment [JR1]: What do you mean by density? Do you mean simply "prevalence"?

ABSTRACT:

How does religious switching—an individual changing from one religious affiliation to another—vary across the life course, and to what extent is religious switching associated with other life course events? This question has previously gone unresolved in sociological literature, because research in this area has utilized only cross-sectional data. By employing longitudinal data from the National Survey of Families and Households, I have traced patterns of religious switching over the life course. Using on four different logistic regression models, I have provided insight into how the likelihood and structure of religious switching changes across the life course. Various life events prove to have different effects at different parts of the life course, with marriage and childbirth having stronger effects in early age and residential relocation having stronger effects at older ages. Propensity for switching greatly decreases with age, and tends to be less likely among females than males. A previous history of religious switching proves to be a very strong predictor of future switching between religions, but is a poor predictor of switches to no religion.

INTRODUCTION:

America is a land of great religious freedoms and religious diversity. Religious pluralism allows for an almost uniquely American phenomenon: religious switching. Over the course of their lives, around one third of Americans will switch their religion once, and about one tenth will switch two or more times (Hodge, Johnson, & Luidens, 1995). Religious switching is thought to be more common in young adulthood than in later life, and is believed to be closely associated with life course events, such as childbirth, residential relocation, marriage, or divorce. However, since previous research has relied only on cross-sectional data, neither of these hypotheses has been adequately tested. The problem with relying entirely on cross-sectional data is that individuals in the study are at different points in the life course when they are interviewed, and have not been questioned about the exact timing of their religious switch.

Comment [JR2]: I would suggest being more explicit (either here or later in the paper) about the limitations of existing data. The bottom line is that you are not able to temporally link change to other life events, right? In theory, this could be dealt with using well-constructed retrospective life-history data, no? What else does panel data give you? Think about this.

Young adulthood, the period from 18-30, is a time when the incidence of life course events such as fertility, residential relocation, and leaving school are at their highest (Rindfuss, 1991). The density of life course events during this period may explain why rates of religious switching also peak during the young adult years. In contrast, as rates of these important life-course events decline in later life, an individual may "settle in" to their chosen lifestyle. This lack of life events, along with the tendency to stabilize preferences and resist large changes, leads to the overall decline in religious switching in older ages.

Comment [JR3]: Surely there is also a social-psychological explanation for the relationship between age and religious switching. It would be nice (but not necessary in my opinon) to bring in more discussion on other factors – to help readers better understand the role of life changes.

Much information on general trends in switching has been gained from prior research, especially on reasons behind switching. Overall, interfaith marriage is the most common reason for religious switching (Musik & Wilson, 1995), again possibly explaining high rates of switching in young adulthood. Other important factors behind religious switching include residential relocation and the dissolving of close family ties (Musik & Wilson, 1995). These life-course events are all most likely to occur during the period of young adulthood, supporting the claim that movement between religions is "Disproportionately composed of young people" (Newport 1979).

Rates of switching vary greatly between different denominations. Nondenominational Protestants have the lowest overall retention rates, and mainline and liberal Protestants show significant losses over the last two decades (Sherkat, 2001). There is a large amount of switching from these groups to conservative Protestant groups (Sherkat, 2001), and loyalty for "other Protestant" groups, usually conservative, has increased over the last 20 years (Sherkat, 2001). Catholics and members of other distinctive denominations (such as very conservative or evangelical Protestant groups) are less likely to switch religions (Loveland, 2003). Early life religious socialization is an important predictor of later life religious behavior. Individuals who formally join a church while growing up are much less likely to switch religions later in life, while individuals who have ever lapsed in their religious attendance are more likely to stay without a religious preference (Loveland, 2003).

Comment [JR4]: I forgot – do you have a good measure of early life religion in the NSFH?

Almost all previous research in this area has utilized cross-sectional data, tracing religious switching over time by using cohorts. In a cross-sectional study, the individuals questioned are of varying ages, and thus have had differing amounts of time in which to switch religions. While we know that the switch has occurred if the respondent's stated religion differs from their reported childhood religion, we do not know when this switch happened. By using longitudinal data from a large sample, we are able to trace patterns of religious switching within the individual's life course, and determine the time period when this switch occurred.

Comment [JR5]: But this is not necessarily a function of the data being cross sectional – life history data could provide this information retrospectively – in fact you have this info from the first wave fo the NSFH. Similarly, longitudinal data might not provide much more info if the duration between waves is long and no attempt is made to assess timing of switch. I appreciate what you are trying to say w/re the limitations of cross-section data but need to be careful about how you make this argument. I think that the real value of longitudinal data comes from something other than ability to date switch – in particular, the presence of baseline measures of religiosity or religious commitment are of great importance in my view. We can talk about this more if you like.

METHODS:

The data for this longitudinal analysis comes from the National Survey of Families and Households, conducted by the University of Wisconsin Center for Demography and Ecology. This survey began in 1987, and had another wave of data collection in 1992-94. At time one, 13,007 respondents were interviewed, and at time two 10,007 responded. The NSFH contains an over-sample of minority groups and certain types of families, but this can be controlled for using a weighting variable in the data. My total sample, using only the nationally representative sample and individuals who responded at both waves, is 7,388 individuals.

At wave one, respondents were first asked "What is your religious preference?" with answers coded in 64 categories. They also asked questions about their religious history, as well as demographic questions about their as age, sex, race, and marital and fertility history. At wave two, the respondents were again asked their religious preference, as well as detailed questions concerning any marriages, divorces, childbirths, or residential relocations after wave 1.

I have estimated four models examine the different types of switching between the first and second interviews. The first model estimated is for any switch between the 64 categories of religion. Model two identifies "big" religious switches, i.e. switches across any pair of the following large categories: Catholic, Liberal Protestant, Conservative Protestant, Jewish, None, and Other. The third and fourth models focus on switches from any religion category to no religion and vice versa. These models are estimated using logistic regression, and I have estimated the likelihood of switching for three different periods in the life course, which I will call early adulthood (16-34 at T1), middle age (35-54 at T1), and older age (55 and over at T1). I have also controlled for the conditions of the respondent previous to T1, such as sex, race, and past history of religious switching.

Variables that might account for different rates and types of switching at different ages include marriage, divorce, childbirth, and significant residential relocation occurring between T1 and T2. Marriage, divorce, and childbirth are all simple binary variables, coded 0 if they did not occur between waves and 1 if they did. Residential relocation was coded similarly–0 if the respondent lived in the same city at T2 as they did at T1, 1 if they lived in a new city. By comparing these variables, I will be able to make observations about the changing rates of switching over the life course, and the factors involved in these switches at differing points in the life course. In addition, I will examine the coefficients of the interactions between marriage and childbirth and divorce and residential relocation, to see if these variables have significant effects on the likelihood of switching. I would expect that a person who ~~underwent~~ experienced both a marriage and childbirth to have a higher likelihood of switching due to the combined effects of these factors in promoting marital religious homogamy. Similarly, the impact of a divorce on switching might be supplemented by a residential move, leading an individual to join or switch churches in search of companionship and support.

Comment [JR6]: Are you going to say anything about selective attrition? I am not sure why it should be a problem in your case but surely it bears mention.

Comment [JR7]: Are these defined by R's age at wave 1 or at wave 2?

Comment [JR8]: What about mulitiple occurrences of one of these (e.g. marriage, divorce ,and remarriage?)

Comment [JR9]: How do you do this? I understand the next point about switches at different points in the life course but am less clear about switching "over the life course" – please clarify here.

Sometimes instructors find themselves writing the same comments on almost every student paper. This example shows how an instructor gives an entire class collective feedback about the most common problems she found in their papers, eliminating the need for detailed explanation on each student's paper.

English 207

RESPONDING WITH FEEDBACK TO AN ENTIRE CLASS IN LITERATURE

Dear 207 Folks,

I wanted to give you some collective feedback about this first paper, in addition to the more personalized notes I've left on each response sheet. Overall, I truly enjoyed reading these papers; most showed evidence of careful thought and hard work. I appreciate that. However, there were some errors common to many papers, and some comments that I found myself writing over and over again, so I thought it might be useful to address them here.

Description vs. Analysis:
Many of you had the right instinct and cited the text in your papers—a fine beginning! However, telling your reader what is there in your poem (just describing it) takes the reader only half-way; continue by teasing out the how and why questions (questions of significance). Also, especially with poetry (but also with prose), it's often useful to ponder the precise language that the author employs—consider these detailed, technical matters and pose a theory of their significance for your reader.

Documentation:
You underline books, like *Songs of Innocence*, and quote poems, like "Holy Thursday." Also, after a quote from a poem, identify it with a line number (not a page number) in parentheses.

Its vs. It's:
If you want to write the contraction for "it is" then use "it's." For example: It's about time we were leaving. If you want to write about something that belongs to "it" then use "its." For example, My dog could chase its tail all day long.

I hope you'll keep these tips in mind next time you sit down to work on a paper—for this (or any other) class.

Thanks for all your effort.

And if you have any questions at all—about comments, grades, the poems themselves, etc., I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE you to come in and chat. If my office hours aren't convenient, I'm happy to make an appointment.

Instructors in Introductory Biology and Introductory Survey of Horticulture large lecture courses model ways of responding to short writing assignments.

Professor Robert L. Jeanne (Entomology), Dr. Lillian Tong (Center for Biology Education), Amber Smith (Horticulture)

RESPONDING TO SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS IN TWO LARGE LECTURE COURSES

EXAMPLES
From David Abbott, Introductory Biology:

Assignment: In your own words, and in complete sentences totaling no more than 100 words, discuss why the function of the dendritic cell can be likened to the famous midnight ride of Paul Revere on the night of 18th of April, 1775. During these excursions, Revere warned the Massachusetts countryside that the British were coming. Include in your answer HOW aspects of the innate and acquired immune responses, and particularly CD4+ (or helper) T cells, fit into the analogy. Remember, I want to know more about the immunology than the history! If you want to refresh your memory of the role played by Paul Revere in the American War of Independence (or American Revolutionary War), by all means visit the following website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Revere

Sample Student Answer #1: Dendritic cells are the “Paul Revere” cells because they warn and alert the rest of the immune system that an invader is inside the body. Dendritic cells display antigen fragments on their class II MHC molecules. Helper T cells then bind to the “flagged” dendritic cell using its T-cell receptor and CD4 molecule forming the immune synapse. The dendritic cells give the T cell the cytokine “message” through the synapse and the T cell activates and releases cytokines arbitrarily. The T cell then undergoes clonal selection and also further goes on to activate the humoral and cell mediated responses.

Feedback: Nice answer. You are on the right track.

Sample Student Answer # 2: Once Paul Revere learned of the bad news, he rode to Lexington warning people of the countryside along the way. Much like Paul, a dendritic cell migrates from peripheral tissues through the lymphatic vessels to the lymph nodes (Lexington) once it ingests a pathogen. This is part of the innate immunity system. By releasing cytokines (analogous to Revere’s warnings) the cell signals for a helper T cell to bind to it’s TCR and form an immune synapse. This stimulates the T cell to proliferate and form effector cells and memory cells (acquired immunity) in order to combat future invaders, much like the rallying of the American army against the British.

Feedback: You omitted the dendritic cell attracting binding of helper T cell receptor.

Sample Student Answer #3: Like Paul Revere, dendritic also send messages of foreign invaders, specifically between the innate and acquired immunity. With the innate immunity, they are on the look-out on tissue surfaces for any foreign antigens (Brits), capture them via phagocytosis (acquire information), and move them to lymphoid tissue (cities in Massachusetts). The antigens are presented to helper T cells (information told to other Yankees) via Class II MCH molecules (lanterns), bound by the T cell receptor and CD4 receptor. The acquired immunity is initiated for a response to fight the antigen (troops are round up to fight the Brits).

Feedback: You omitted the immune synapse and/or dendritic cell releasing cytokines.

****

From Amber Smith, Introductory Survey of Horticulture:

Assignment: Self-pollination and cross pollination have different effects on genetic diversity. Do you think that self-pollinating populations would have more or less phenotypic diversity? Why?

Sample Student Response #1: I think self-pollinating populations would have less phenotypic diversity. In general, phenotype is the direct physical expression of genotype. If the plant is self-pollinating, that means less genetic variation, which in turn means less phenotypic variation.Grade: 3

Feedback: Great answer! It is good that you could connect the effect of genetic diversity on genotype and phenotype.

Sample Student Response #2: Self-pollinating populations will have less genetic diversity because the population is only reproducing with itself. For example, one population of dark purple flowered pea plants self-pollinates while another population of white flowered pea plants self-pollinates resulting in only purple and white flowered plants. If these populations were to cross-pollinate, a new hybrid species of pale purple flowered pea plants could result. However, if plants are selectively cross-pollinated so much that there are few various species left, as is common in agricultural practices within the US, phenotypic diversity will decrease as we select for certain properties. Grade: 3

Feedback: You make a very good point about the relationship between the number of species being cross pollinated and diversity.

Sample Student Response #3: I think that self-pollinating populations would have more phenotypic diversity because it allows plants to spread beyond the range of suitable pollinators or produce offspring in areas where pollinator populations have been greatly reduced or are naturally variable. Grade: 0

Feedback: You have confused self and cross pollination. During self-pollination the pollen from a plant is used to fertilize the ova or eggs from the same plant. There is less genetic diversity because there is only one set of genes that can recombine. In contrast, during cross pollination there are different mothers and fathers so to speak. A single female plant may be pollinated by several male plants. Cross pollination allows for recombination of the genetic material of many plants.

Professor John Yin provides marginal comments and an end note comment on a group's research proposal ("Preventing Food Spoilage through the Commercial Development of Enterocin AS-48"). His comments highlight strengths and weaknesses, pose questions that refine students' thinking, and justify his evaluation.

Professor John Yin
Chemical and Biological Engineering 560

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON TEAM RESEARCH PROJECTS IN BIOCHEMICAL ENGINEERING

too broad: are you considering only developed or also developing countries?

Project Summary

how large? possible to estimate?

US, and where else?

Food waste is a global issue and a large percentage of this waste could be avoided with improved preservation techniques. With increasing consumer demand for fresh foods and natural preservation methods, bacteriocins provide an excellent solution. The proposed research seeks to improve commercial production of the broad spectrum inhibitory enterocin AS-48 by evaluating its production by bacterial species which are Generally Regarded as Safe ✓ (GRAS) in several food-grade medias which have not been evaluated previously for AS-48 production. The research will also evaluate a single-step purification method for AS-48 recovery

potential for high cost.

Objective 1: Evaluate AS-48 production by *Enterococcus faecalis* UGRA10 in four food-grade medias: cull potatoes, mussel processing waste, visceral and fish muscle residues, and brewery wastes. This objective will be accomplished by inoculating AS-48 producer strain in a bioreactor, holding all variables constant (volume, temperature, pH, etc.) except media type. Each batch will be tested for cell viability and counts using plating techniques. AS-48 activity will be tested using both Agar based and classical broth based minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) tests. The complex media de Man Rogosa Sharpe (MRS) will also be evaluated as a control.

needs to be pure? (and purified from broth)

Objective 2: Evaluate AS-48 purification and recovery in a single step using expanded bed ion exchange chromatography. Each media will be tested at varying flow rates with media pH adjustments to varying values before application to the chromatography column. Recovery will be evaluated by AS-48 activity measurements before and after column application.

Objective 3: Evaluate the economic impact of newly implemented food grade medias in combination with single step recovery on As-48 production. A simple cost-benefit analysis will be used to compare medias based on production and recovery to evaluate the least expensive choice for the overall process.

Doesn't the fermentation broth contain compounds that could affect AS-48 activity assay – false high or false low?

for all medias is low, the two-step method outlined by Abrouiel et al., 2003 will be scaled up and evaluated for each media and the MRS control in a similar manner to the EB IEC evaluation. ok

Specific Aim 3: Evaluate the economic impact of newly implemented food grade medias in combination with single step recovery on As-48 production.

Rationale: Complex laboratory medias for bacteriocin production such as MRS media and Elliker broths are costly, amounting to as much as 30% of the total production cost in large-scale systems (Garsa et al., 2014). This is one of the primary barriers to bacteriocin commercialization. With Specific Aims 1 and 2, this research proposes to evaluate and optimize production of enterocin AS-48 in less expensive and food grade medias and recovery processes. This study further proposes to use the data obtained in Specific Aims 1 and 2 to minimize the overall cost of a large-scale enterocin AS-48 production system.

Methods: To determine the best option, a basic cost-benefit analysis for each media type will be used. The parameters for the analysis will include but not be limited to media cost, cost of additional nutrients, if necessary, cost of other additional chemicals (e.g. for pH adjustments), and cost for disposal of materials after, if necessary. Costs that remain constant for the different medias used (equipment such as the bioreactor itself, pumps, the chromatography column body, etc.) will not be included in the comparison. The costs will be adjusted to account for differences in production and recovery to facilitate comparison on a basis of enterocin AS-48 activity.

Expected outcomes and alternative approaches: It is expected that one of the medias will be found to be less expensive overall than the others. In the event that one is not clearly superior to the others, alternative criteria, such as the media with the highest AS-48 production and recovery or the media which is easiest to obtain will be devised and utilized to determine the most economical option.

Would the anticipated process be implemented on-site where food-grade media are produced, or would such media need to be packaged and delivered to site of AS-48 production?

Timeline

This project is expected to be completed within 2 years. The first year will focus on determining the optimum media for the production of As-48. It will likely take the first several months to set-up and optimize all of the bioreactors. Next the batches will be allowed to grow, each being tested at predetermined intervals of time to see the level of bacterial growth. Once the levels of bacteria reach a limit the batches will be ended, each depending on the rate of growth in its specific reactor, and As-48 efficacy will be tested as outlined earlier. After the efficacy samples have been taken, the purification method listed earlier will be used to separate out the As-48 and its feasibility and efficacy will be evaluated and compared to current yields found in Nisin and Pediocin in industry.

Future work and expected directions

The future work will largely be determined by the results of the study. If any or all of the medias present promising results then they will all be studied further to determine optimal conditions to grow the most As-48 producing bacteria. If any of the medias fail, additives will be tested to determine whether yields can be improved. Given time, it may be worthwhile to pursue the idea of mixing medias together to produce a more robust media that combines the advantages of each individual ~~medai~~ media.

92/100

This is a very good project. Well-researched and overall well-written. Consider contacting producers of food-grade media – might they be interested in a process add-on to make AS-48? What precedent is there for commercially successful products based on processing of food-grade media?

Asking students to evaluate themselves, as Professor Virginia Sapiro does in her capstone Women's Studies course, is an excellent way to help students think critically about their own work and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Professor Virginia Sapiro
Women's Studies 640

STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

This course was about leadership. An important part of leadership is taking responsibility for your own actions, holding yourself accountable, and being able to evaluate yourself in a serious, principled way. All students in WS640 should use this form to do self-evaluation that will be fed into their final grade. Please answer the *four* sets of questions that appear below.

Here is the grade distribution as it appears in the syllabus:

Response papers: 15%
In-class work: 20%
Major Project: 65%
Development stages (consultation, proposal, progress report): 20%.
Comments and responses to colleagues: 5%.
Final presentation: 10%.
Final paper: 30%

1. Where do you want the 10% to go?
The final presentation is no longer required, so I am giving you the choice of where to put that 10% of the grade. If you have done a presentation, you can keep that as 10% of your grade. Or you can move that 10% to any other part of the course. You can move it as two 5% pieces (say, 5% more to response papers and 5% more to the development stages of your project) or one 10% piece (have your final paper count 10% more). For people who did a video or poster or something else instead of a paper, those things count as the paper.

2. Please evaluate your response papers: (Circle the letter that represents your honest evaluation of your response papers, taking account of the comments I made in response to your responses, then explain why you picked the grade you did):

A: I did my response papers after doing all of the reading, thinking carefully about the issues, and choosing the subject of my response papers thoughtfully. My papers represented learning (that is, they were not just things I could have easily said without doing the reading), and they grappled with important questions or ideas. If someone else read them, that person would be likely to learn something interesting or important from them.

AB: My response papers came pretty close to the mark described above; perhaps one of them was not really up to that standard, but it was pretty good as well.

B: My response papers were based on doing all or most of the reading and they were completely relevant to the issues raised in the readings. They represented learning, but they generally were framed around basically describing the readings without engaging in much critical analysis or they asked fairly simple, standard, or rhetorical questions. Or maybe I had one really great response paper, but the others were pretty standard.

BC: I did quite a lot of the reading and conscientiously wrote my response papers. They were good, as described in the "B" category, but perhaps one was pretty perfunctory. Or at least one of them I just found something to write on, and didn't really do the readings more extensively for that week. I'm not sure anyone would learn much from them, but they responded to the assignment.

C: I did my response papers, but mostly by doing minimal reading and just finding something to say. Or, they were pretty minimal, mostly brief description or just finding a question to ask without attempting to answer my question (as in, "I noticed the author never talked about X"). Or I did a couple of ok ones and skipped the other. It is unlikely that anyone would learn much from my response papers.

D: I only did one, with no legitimate excuse. Or none of them were really any good; they don't represent any learning; or, I basically looked at one of the readings pretty briefly and came up with something to hand in just to hand it in. I could have done the response papers without doing the reading.

F: I didn't even manage that.

Why did you choose the grade you did for your response papers?

3. ***Please evaluate your in-class work***, ***emphasizing your contribution to the class through discussion or other forms of activity and leadership.*** (Note that the syllabus indicated you were required to participate in a contributory way, not just through silent work.) Use the cards you filled out to help you. Use the rubric you have been using all semester to summarize your grade for the semester:

A: Outstanding Contributor: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are almost always substantive, provide one or more major insights as well as direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and persuasively presented. If I were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would have been diminished markedly. There may have been one class when I didn't participate at all, but all of the rest of the time, this paragraph describes my contributions.

AB: The paragraph above describes how I was most of the time.

B: Good Contributor: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, provide good insights and sometimes direction for the class. Challenges are well-substantiated and often persuasive. If I were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would often have been diminished.

BC: Somewhere in between B and C.

C: Adequate Contributor: Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Most of my interventions were pretty basic questions (or perhaps I almost always asked pretty much the same question regardless of what was going on) that were worth asking, but didn't add a lot. If I were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished somewhat sometimes.

F: Unsatisfactory Contributor: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide few if any insights and never a constructive direction for the class. Integrative comments and effective challenges are absent. If this person were not a member of the class, valuable air-time would be saved.

For those who were usually Non-Participants: For all of you, if you were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would not have been changed. *But consider these differences:*

If you were usually a non-participant and you hadn't done much preparation for classes, observed what was going on mostly passively, took few or no notes, often found your mind wandering, and didn't get much out of it OR you missed three or more classes without a legitimate excuse, the best you can give yourself for this component of the course is a D.

If you were usually a non-participant but you were well-prepared for the classes, were mentally very active in the course, thought a lot about what was going on, took notes regularly, thought about questions you would have liked to ask if you were braver, the best you can give yourself for this component of the course is a BC. Judge what to give yourself on how active you were mentally, how prepared, your note-taking, etc.

Please grade yourself and explain your grade:

4. Evaluate yourself on the developmental stages of your project. You can give yourself an **A** if you have really treated this like a major course project for the semester. For example, if you have been working on it since before spring break in a serious way and have put in a lot of effort and have done a lot of good research or other appropriate work, this is work you can be proud of. At the other end of the scale (failing to engage in the developmental stages) would be those who haven't really seriously settled into a topic yet or otherwise don't have much idea what you are doing and will be doing the vast majority of the work for your project between now and when it is due. If you haven't made serious inroads into the work for your paper yet you should not give yourself more than a **D** for the developmental stages, even if you had the required consult and handed in the required reports.

Evaluate the developmental stages of your project and explain your evaluation:

Instructor David Hudson worked with Professor Adam Kern to develop questions that students can use to evaluate their storyboard work before they turn it in.

David Hudson
English

SELF-EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR A STORYBOARD ASSIGNMENT

Storyboards visually lay out a plan for a video so that the plan can be revised and improved. Keep in mind then that a storyboard can be evaluated on two levels:

1. **By how well it communicates the logic of the video's proposed design.** If the designer has a fantastic idea for a video, but the storyboard doesn't communicate that plan well, the storyboard hasn't achieved its purpose. No one else can approve the plan, others on the design team who might help implement it will not know what to do, and the design team as a whole cannot make useful improvements to the proposed video design.
2. **As the actual plan of the video.** If the storyboard is well enough designed that the video's plan is easy to follow, the design team can begin looking for places to make fruitful revisions to the video's design. For example, such revisions might involve the video's focus, organization, pacing, combination of multimodal elements, choice of images, etc.

The questions below are meant to help you consider both aspects of your storyboard: how well it communicates the plan and how the plan itself might be revised. In each set of questions, concerns for clarity are addressed in the first bullet point or two; the rest are concerned with the design of the plan itself.

Who is the intended audience(s) of the proposed video and of the storyboard?

- Who is the intended audience for the storyboard? What purposes does this particular storyboard most serve: getting the design approved, eliciting feedback from others, helping collaborators work together on this project, providing a "rough draft" of the video plan primarily for the designer? How does the storyboard help meet the needs of its intended audiences?
- Who seems to be the intended audience of the proposed video, and what is this video's primary purpose? How does the video's design take these into account?

What seems to be the message and conceptual grounding of the planned project?

- What is the overall argument, or message, of the proposed video? How well could outside readers understand this message, based on the storyboard?
- How does the storyboard communicate the most important concepts or ideas in this project? Where does the storyboard best communicate these concepts, and where might the storyboard make the ideas that inform the video clearer or more developed?

How does the order of takes and scenes seem to contribute to the planned message?

- How well, based on the storyboard, could someone other than the storyboard designer understand the way scenes will be developed? Do some seem more or less important to the overall message? Where might an idea be developed more, or developed differently? Do any slides seem potentially superfluous?
- In short, how are ideas linked, and why does the order of ideas matter? For example, what if you shifted the order of some scenes, or of frames within scenes? How might that affect the overall message, the coherence of key ideas, or the effect on viewers?
- How does the planned opening set up the rest of the video? Based on the opening alone, what kind of expectations would you have for what follows? How hooked would you be as a viewer? How does the rest of the storyboard build on this opening?
- If you looked at just the plan for the conclusion, what would you remember about the video? How do you think these concluding images and ideas will influence viewers' "takeaway" from the video? What makes the conclusion forceful?

What is the relationship among the visuals, audio, and text (spoken or written)?

- How does the storyboard represent the relationship among these elements (image, speaking, writing, music and sound effects)? How easily can readers see, at a glance, how each of these elements are working in each major part of the storyboard? For example, does the storyboard just explain the image or the voice-over narration, or does it also identify any music, audio effects, written text, camera movement, or timing of the shot/scene?
- Overall, how do the relationships among these elements contribute to the video's message/argument?
- How might they contribute to viewers' overall experience (e.g. tone and mood, recognition of themes, sense of relationship to the subject matter)?
- Where do the visual, aural, and textual elements seem planned so as to complement one another especially well?
- Where might the storyboard, and the proposed video, get more mileage out of a sequence by making greater use of one or more of these elements?

What roles do the film's pacing and transitions play in its overall message?

- Based on the storyboard, how easy is it to get a sense of the overall pacing of the video? How might the reasoning for this pacing need to be explained to the storyboard's audience?
- How do the planned transitions contribute to the overall message?
- How does the plan's use of camera angles and movement (panning, zooming, etc.) contribute to the intended effect?
- How do transitions and camera use complement the overall pacing of the video and its intended effects?

TA Brad Franklin's Portfolio Project asks students in a course for future math teachers to reflect on their own learning process during the semester by preparing a cover letter, selecting their best work, extending their earlier "reflections," and writing a short paper linking their experiences to math-teaching research.

Brad Franklin
Math 130

A PORTFOLIO PROJECT IN MATH

Purpose:

The main point of this project is to address the fourth of the goals for this course that I gave at the beginning of this semester (look it up). I hope that it also provides you with an opportunity to bring together much of what you have learned during the semester and to highlight what this course has made possible both for you and for your future students. As a bonus, you may end up with something you want to show to prospective employers!

Contents:

1. A cover letter summarizing the contents of the portfolio and stating the purpose of it in your own words.

2. Four of your strongest problem write-ups, along with an explanation of why you chose each one: either because you solved a hard problem, you were creative or had an original solution or nice explanation, or whatever. You may also mention how you might still improve on the report.

3. All of your "reflections" from throughout the semester, along with any further thoughts you have on the topics.

   Also, write a reflection on: what do you *personally* find valuable about cooperative learning as a pedagogical method as it was used in Math 130, and what do you find problematic about it? (be critical and frank)

4. Write a short paper in response to an article in math-education research. I have suggested some below. It should be at least two but no more than four pages. The object here is to bring your own experience to bear to assess the claims made by fellow researchers in math education.

   You have something valuable to contribute to other teachers' understanding of how math is learned and how it can be taught effectively! Explain yourself with clear, well-formulated arguments, specific examples, and careful explanations (and pictures, even), just like in your problem reports.

   Important: once you have chosen the article you want to respond to, you must get my approval. Only five people can write about each paper, and it's first come, first served!

The grade on your project will be three-pronged:

- The thoughtfulness and thoroughness of the work.
- The clarity and overall effectiveness of the arguments that you make (remember, specific examples used to illustrate all general statements).
- The overall presentation of the portfolio.

If you want to do something in place of this portfolio which fulfills the same purpose, such as creating and using a cooperative learning lesson plan and writing up a report on your experience, or observing a cooperative learning elementary/secondary classroom, you are highly encouraged to pursue this! See me and I will help you make it happen.

Course coordinator Cindee Giffen explains why Biology 151/152 evaluates biology students' drafts, reviews, and final products together in one portfolio.

Cindee Giffen, Course Coordinator
Introductory Biology 151/152

A Writing Portfolio in Biology: Balancing Process with Product

In Introductory Biology 152, all students engage in an Independent Project (IP), a semester-long staged writing assignment. Students write a project proposal, a first draft, and a final paper in scientific journal article-style, and present their results to an audience of their peers and instructors. Students are given formative feedback on their proposal and first draft; only the final paper and oral presentation are formally graded. When the final paper is graded, instructors review not only the final product, but all previous drafts and reviews; this body of work becomes the student's IP portfolio. Students are given credit for making progress from one draft to the next, for how well they respond to their reviewers' comments, as well as for the quality of their final paper.

Why would you assign a portfolio writing assignment?

Many lower-division undergraduates need help in planning and executing a semester-long project, and may not be disciplined enough to work throughout the semester without periodic deadlines and having points associated with those deadlines. At the beginning of the semester all students are given 20 "progress points." Students can keep all of these points by making adequate progress at each stage and submitting assignments on time. Progress points account for 20 of 120 total points for the written portion of the Independent Project. We hope that after having this experience, students will be better organized and more likely to start projects earlier in future courses. Students often comment on how much they have improved over the course of the semester, so we believe that students will be more likely to engage in the writing process (i.e. drafting, revision, peer review, editing) if they have had positive exposure to a portfolio assignment.

Grading a student's entire portfolio for a project allows an instructor to reward students for improvement and reinforce good working habits. If we formally graded each draft, students with a lower level of college preparation or ESL students could be disproportionately impacted. Our reviewers would not be able to focus on global concerns in early drafts, and high-achieving students might be less willing to put as much effort into the subsequent drafts. Portfolio grading enables an instructor to push each student to make gains in their writing, so that the final products are of the best quality possible.

Tracking a student's response to review is another advantage of the portfolio process. Introductory Biology 152 is a Communication-B course, and is therefore meant to teach students about discipline-specific communication. Responding to critical review is a fundamental part of science, so we explicitly define it as a goal of this assignment. Through several drafts, students learn how to incorporate reviewer comments into their writing, as well as how to defend their choices should they decide to not act on their reviewer's suggestion.

A complete Independent Project portfolio contains:

- The final draft of the student's IP
- For mentored research students: the mentor-reviewed and signed copy of their paper
  Reviewed Proposal and First draft
  Peer review sheet
- Peer review receipt
- Any additional materials specifically requested of you previously by your reviewer.
  (Optional but recommended.) A letter to your reviewer supplying any necessary extra information regarding your particular project

Students are graded on the quality of their final paper, as well as the progress they made and their response to critical comments.

FOSTERING RESEARCH AND INQUIRY

A cross-campus group of UW-Madison's librarians explain here how librarians can help you teach advanced library and information literacy skills.

UW-Madison Libraries

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LIBRARY RESEARCH & INFORMATION LITERACY COMPONENT OF COMMUNICATION-B COURSES

The Communication-B requirement specifies that students should learn to use the "core library resources specific to disciplinary inquiry." This includes how information is produced and disseminated, as well as how to find, evaluate, and use information in a disciplinary context.

The UW-Madison Libraries offer a variety of services that can help your students be successful. We can work with you directly to develop the information literacy component of your Comm-B course and help you design an appropriate library research assignment. Here are some suggestions to consider:

Address foundational academic research skills. Many of your students may not be familiar with academic research and the UW-Madison Libraries. Encourage students who were not required to complete the Communication-A requirement (e.g. due to Advanced Placement or transfer credits) to complete the Libraries@UW **Sift & Winnow** module, a multimedia library tutorial that introduces some of the basic resources and search strategies covered in the library module of the Comm-A course. (See: https://go.wisc.edu/siftwinnow)

- Motivate your students by explaining how the research assignment connects with the authentic work that scholars and practitioners do.
- Address both the practical "how to" aspects of information seeking and how research informs academic discourse in your field. Novice researchers need to learn about both research processes and the bigger picture.
- Model the ways that advanced researchers weed through and evaluate information. Talk about how you discern the quality of information sources and how different sources could be used.
- Talk about the research process (and not just the final product). Have the students reflect on key stages of the research process as part of your assignment.
- Craft assignments that require students to explore the physical and virtual library. Learning to branch out from familiar resources and seek assistance will help them to become effective independent learners.

Here are some of the ways that librarians collaborate with faculty to support students:

- **Research Assignment Consultations:** Librarians can meet with you to help craft effective research assignments that engage students, help them develop the research skills you value, and guide them to quality sources.
- **Teaching:** Librarians design and teach course-related instructional sessions focused on the skills and research strategies students need to be successful. These sessions are customized to your course and assignments.
- **Instructional Materials:** Librarians can develop research guides designed for your course, be embedded into your Canvas pages to add course-related guides, suggest library resources, develop tutorials, design short assignments, or be available to provide virtual assistance/instruction.
- **Workshops:** Each semester the library offers free workshops on topics such as conducting literature reviews and the use of citation management tools. These workshops are open to all, or the content can be customized for your course.

However you design the information literacy component of your class, consultation with librarians can help your students be successful. Contact the Program Director, Sheila Stoeckel, who can discuss your assignment and connect you with the campus library that best meets your students' research needs.

The UW-Madison Libraries Teaching & Learning Programs Office can be reached by phone at 265-2755 and by email at libinstruct@library.wisc.edu. More information about the services provided to faculty and instructional staff is at: https://library.wisc.edu/services/teaching-learning-services/

Sheila Stoeckel, UW-Madison's campus coordinator for Library and Information Literacy Instruction, offers advice for helping students succeed with the information literacy component of research projects in your Writing-Intensive courses.

Sheila Stoeckel
Coordinator, Library and Information Literacy Instruction Program

TIPS FOR DESIGNING LIBRARY RESEARCH ASSIGNMENTS

Effective research assignments encourage students' engagement with course content and the literature of your discipline, and also promote the development of information literacy skills such as finding and evaluating information. The following recommendations can help students develop research skills and improve the quality of their research assignments.

- **Address Learning Goals Related to the Research Process**. Information Literacy, the ability to find information and use it effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, is included among the "Essential Learning Outcomes" for students at UW-Madison. Consider what research skills you would like students to develop in completing the assignment and discuss with your students the importance of developing those skills.
- **Be Clear about Your Expectations**. Remember that your students may not have prior experience with scholarly journals, monographs, or academic libraries. Spend time in class discussing how research is produced and disseminated in your discipline and how you expect your students to participate in academic discourse in the context of your class.
- **Scaffolding your Assignment Brings Focus to the Research Process**. Breaking a complex research assignment down into a sequence of smaller, more manageable parts has a number of benefits: it models how to approach a research question and effective time management, it gives students the opportunity to focus on and master key research skills, it provides opportunities for feedback, and it can be an effective deterrent to plagiarism.
- **Devote Class Time to Discussion of the Assignment in Progress**. Periodic discussions in class can help students reflect on the research process and its importance, encourage questions, and help students develop a sense that what they are doing is a transferable process that they can use for other assignments.
- **Criteria for Assessment**. In your criteria for assessment (i.e. written instructions, rubrics), make expectations related to the research process explicit. For example, are there specific expectations for the types of resources students should use and how they should be cited? What do you mean by "scholarly articles"? Research shows that students tend to use more scholarly sources when faculty provide them with clear guidelines regarding the types of sources that should be used.
- **Test Your Assignment**. In testing an assignment yourself, you may uncover practical roadblocks (e.g., too few copies of a book for too many students, a source is no longer available online). Librarians can help with testing your assignment, suggest strategies for mitigating roadblocks (i.e. place books on reserve for your students, suggest other resources), or design customized supporting materials (i.e. handouts or web pages).
- **Collaborate with Librarians**. Librarians can help you design an effective research assignment that helps students develop the research skills you value and introduces your students to the most useful resources. We can also work with you to develop and teach a library instruction session for your students that will help them learn the strategies they will need in order to complete your assignment.

Librarians are eager to collaborate with you on the design of research assignments that help students develop the research skills you value. Librarians can also work with you to design customized library instruction sessions and instructional materials that will guide your students and help them master the skills they will need to complete your assignment successfully.

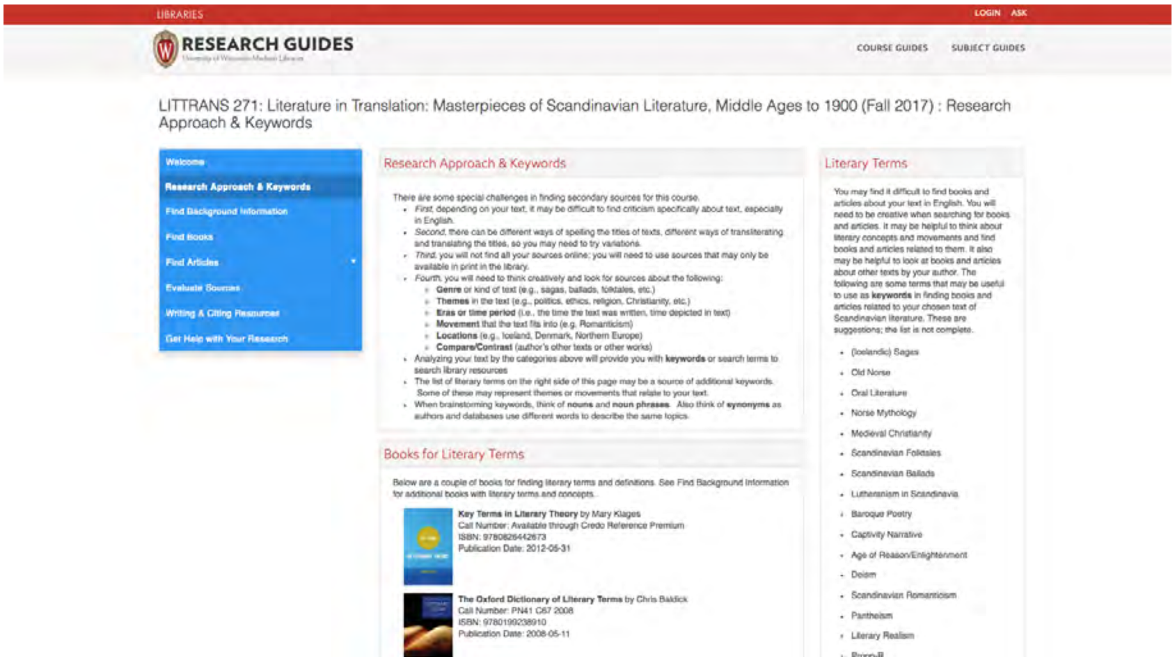
For more information about how we can help, please go to the campus Libraries' Teaching & Learning Services website at https://library.wisc.edu/services/teaching-learning-services/ or contact Director for UW-Madison Libraries Teaching & Learning Programs Sheila Stoeckel (sheila.stoeckel@wisc.edu) for connections to subject specialists across campus.

These recommendations complement "Tips for Writing an Assignment and Teaching it to Students" in this volume. We are happy to schedule a joint library and writing consultation about your research assignment to get advice about research, writing, and grading, as well as to arrange instructional services for your course.

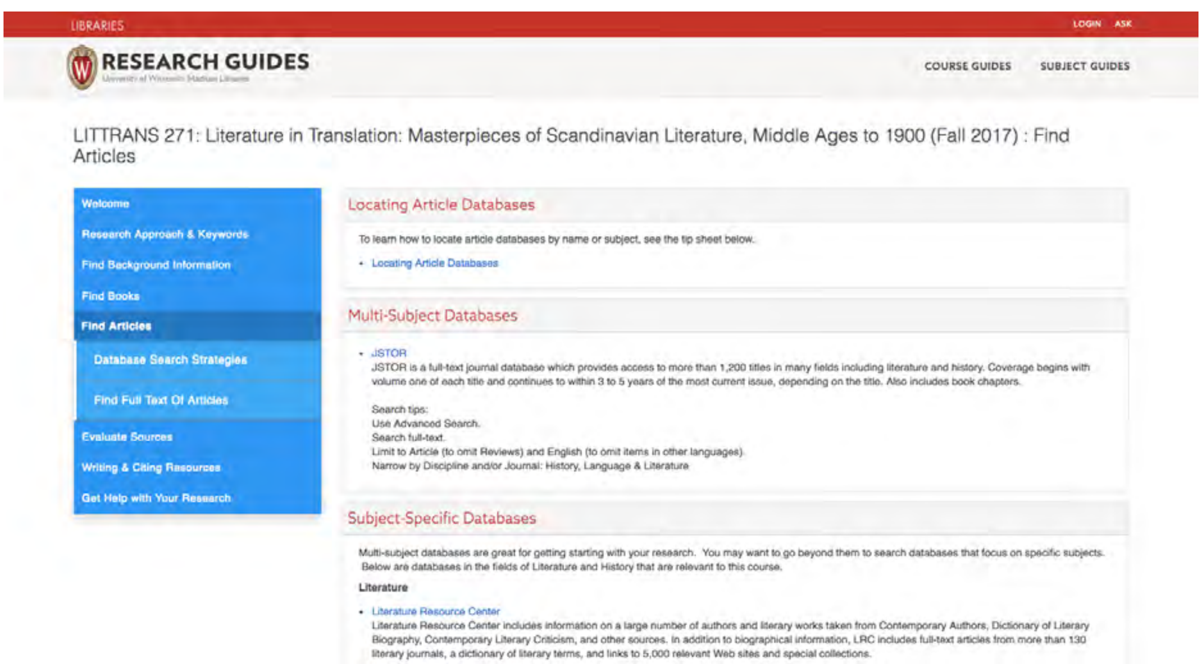
Librarians at Memorial Library teach library instruction sessions for sections of a Literature in Translation course. To facilitate students' research during the library visit and afterwards, librarians create a research guide accessible through the Canvas course site. The guide is customized for the course and assignments and includes research strategies, library resources, and tips and tutorials for finding and evaluating sources. The sessions, providing hands-on practice, and the research guide help students develop advanced, subject-specific research skills.*

A RESEARCH GUIDE FOR A LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION COURSE

"Research Approach & Keywords" Page



"Find Articles" Page



Members of the Citation Management Working Group discuss benefits of teaching students to use citation management tools, such as EndNote and Zotero, and they suggest some approaches for doing so effectively.

Rebecca Payne
Emily Wixson
Citation Management Working Group

USING CITATION MANAGEMENT TOOLS IN WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Do your students submit papers with improper or inadequate citations? Do your students need to gather information sources for group projects? Citation management tools can help.

Citation managers such as EndNote, Mendeley, Papers, and Zotero, are software applications that will help you:

- Gather references automatically from article databases while you research
- Format citations and bibliographies instantly in a variety of styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, Turabian, etc.)
- Create and organize a personal research database of references, images, and PDFs
- Share your databases with your study group or your colleagues around the world

While students think of these tools as easy ways to format a bibliography for an assignment, citation management tools provide many other benefits to students when incorporated into course assignments. Such benefits include:

- Collecting references for later evaluation
- Organizing references by topic or subtopic into folders or groups, allowing students to spot areas of inadequate or missing information
- Adding notes or annotations to help critically evaluate the relevance of a given reference to the assignment or project
- Creating shared folders for a group assignment collaboration
- Creating student-annotated bibliographies
- Building personal libraries of references in the chosen discipline for future scholarship
- Modeling behavior of scholars and researchers

Two examples of the use of citation managers in undergraduate courses include:

Learning Goal: Introduce students to a citation manager for college-level research.
The Biology 152 (Introductory Biology, Comm-B) is a 5-credit introductory biology course, with a laboratory component. Students are required to complete a semester long, scaffolded, independent research project as a component of the course. The independent research project is meant to give the students an authentic experience in constructing a research question/hypothesis, and then using research data acquired either through bench research or a meta-analysis method to respond scientifically to the question/hypothesis. All students must search the literature deeply for prior research that provides support for the background and biological rationale of the project, methodology, and, for the meta-analysis track research, appropriate data for an identified metric to synthesize. Students are required to produce a proposal; a first draft of a paper; final draft of a paper; and a presentation version of their research (PowerPoint or a large format printed poster). Appropriate references, formatted in the Council of Science Editors N-Y style, are required for all steps of the project. Students are introduced to citation management software during a library session where they explore databases, in order to maintain and organize the articles they find in a variety of databases, and to properly format their citations for all steps of the independent project.

Learning Goal: Acquaint students with citation management tools as integral to the research process.
Chemistry 346 (Intermediate Organic Synthesis Laboratory) is designed to assist undergraduates in making the transition from an undergraduate laboratory course to a laboratory researcher environment. In the context of laboratory experiments, students explore chemistry information sources, collect and organize relevant references in a selected citation manager, and create bibliographies using two different journal output styles. The research component of the course includes a final poster presentation which must include a list of annotated references created using the citation manager. Students learn to use the tool while they are exploring chemistry literature databases and maintain their personal libraries throughout the semester in this Comm-B course.

To help you select the appropriate citation manager for your work and for your course, see this Features Comparison chart: https://library.wisc.edu/citation-managers/comparison.html

The Citation Management consultants are available to help you design assignments that incorporate citation management tools. You can find a Citation Management consultant online at https://library.wisc.edu/services/citation-managers/ or email libinstruct@library.wisc.edu.

Rev. RP and SS 7/18

In this excerpt from a syllabus, which includes the course's main writing assignment, Ciaran Trace from Library and Information Studies gives her students options and models for writing their term papers about archival work.

Ciaran B. Trace
Library and Information Studies 818

Writing about Archives in Library and Information Studies

Course Description and Objectives
This course looks at the theories, principles, and practices behind the archivist's decision to both acquire records and designate them as worthy of long-term retention in an archive. Particular emphasis is placed on understanding archival views about society, the role of the archivist, and the issue of value as it relates to archival material. This course includes a combination of lectures and class discussions, and emphasizes archival professionalism, the skills required to meet current problems, and analytical thinking and writing.

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Articulate and analyze why society creates, keeps, and destroys records
- Articulate and analyze why archivists are so concerned with appraisal and critique the perceived differences involved in appraising archives and manuscript material
- Identify, summarize, and evaluate historical and contemporary ideas and theories about archival acquisition and appraisal
- Articulate and interpret what these theories and the practice of archival appraisal say about our view of the nature of society, the role of the archivist, and the nature of archival material
- Understand how to appraise records in a variety of media (paper, electronic, architectural records, sound recordings, photographs, moving images)
- Understand some of the day-to-day issues that archivists confront when appraising and accessioning records
- Design policies to appraise, acquire, and deaccession material
- Apply writing as a tool for understanding an archival appraisal issue of particular personal interest

Term Paper
The term paper is an opportunity for students to expand their scope on a topic of interest that is part of the syllabus. Students will have broad latitude in selecting a topic. In writing the term paper, students should choose one of the article formats appropriate for submission to the *American Archivist*. As such, papers can be either a *Research Article* (analytical and critical exposition based on original investigation or on systematic review of literature), a *Case Study* (analytical report of a project or activity that took place in a specific setting and which offers the basis for emulation or comparison in other settings), or a *Perspective* (commentary, reflective or opinion piece, addressing issues or practices that concern archivists and their constituents). Term papers should be approximately 20 typed pages (double spaced). Students should use the *Chicago Manual of Style* as the standard of style and endnote format.

Examples of possible paper topics include:

- A review and comparison of archival appraisal with appraisal in other disciplines
- A review of the applicability of theories from other disciplines to archival appraisal concerns
- A commentary on archival appraisal from a non-western perspective
- A review and comparison of particular appraisal theories or methods
- A comparative case study of archival appraisal or collection policies at the institutional, national, or international level
- A reflection or research paper on the impact of electronic records on archival appraisal theory and/or practice
- A review and commentary on the impact of technology storage projects such as Paradigm and MyLifeBits on the theory and practice of archival appraisal
- A case study of how a particular appraisal theory or method has been applied in a particular environment (government, college/universities, science and technology)
- A review of the applicability, or otherwise, of traditional appraisal theory to non-textual or electronic media
- An examination of the legitimacy of the idea of the "archivist as activist" as reflected in archival appraisal and collecting decisions

Examples of papers written for this class in the past include:

- The Legacy of Gilgamesh: History, Archives, and the Search for Immortality
- Beyond Separatism and Assimilation: A Proposed Documentation Strategy for Collecting LGBT Materials
- From Impact to Interaction: Public Access Television and the Appraisal of Moving Images
- "Fear of Music" and the "Tyranny of the Medium": What Archivists Know and May Not Know (But Should) About the Music Materials in Their Collections
- The LaFollette High School Archives and History Museum: A Collection Strategy
- Going, Going, Gone! The Threat Facing Blogs and Personal Electronic Records

The final paper will be broken down into three components:

Selection of paper topic. By week four (Friday, February 16th), in a single-spaced page, provide a full description of your paper topic, paying particular attention to the research question you want to investigate.

Outline of the paper topic. By week seven (Friday, March 9th), in no less than four double-spaced typed pages, provide an outline of the paper. The outline should include the following elements.

- Tell me what you are planning to write about. What is the topic? What is the purpose of your paper? Why is it significant?
- What is your research question, thesis statement, or topic statement? (A *research question* is an analytical question that you want to answer in your paper. In your paper you will analyze and explore possible answers to this research question. If the purpose of your paper is to provide information about the subject, the *topic statement* simply identifies the subject and indicates what you have to say about it. On the other hand, a *thesis statement* is an argumentative statement that you work to prove in your paper. Unlike the research question, you begin by taking a side.) What are the main concepts or keywords in your statement or question?
- What format will the paper take?
    - Research Article=analytical and critical exposition based on original investigation or on systematic review of literature.
    - Case Study=analytical report of a project or activity that took place in a specific setting and which offers the basis for emulation or comparison in other settings.
    - Perspective=commentary, reflective, or opinion piece, addressing issues or practices that concern archivists and their constituents.
- Who are you writing for? Who is your audience? What does your reader already know about the topic? What do they need to know? What impact will your paper have on this reader? Inform/persuade? How will you spark a reader's interest?
- What background material is relevant? Do you have enough background material to write the paper? What sources are you using?
- What organizational plan will best support your purpose? Why? What will your paper address first, what it will address next, etc.? What will form your introduction, body, and conclusion?

A draft of the final paper is due in class week 12 (Friday, April 13th). At this stage the content of the paper should be complete. It is not necessary to have the bibliography finalized or to have the paper correctly formatted.

Criteria for grading of final papers:

- Structure and coherence. (There is a clear introduction built around a research question/thesis statement/topic statement; subsequent paragraphs contribute significantly to the development of the thesis-logical and clear ideas, solid arguments, coherent paragraphs, and good transitions; and there is a persuasive conclusion that "pulls together" the body of the paper.)
- Depth of analysis. (Well informed, use of evidence, arguments are supported, analysis is clear and logical, serious consideration of counter argument.s)
- Style. (Clarity of expression, good sentence structure, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citation style.)
- Originality and independence of ideas. (Ability to move beyond course concepts.)

Professor Robert Hawkins' assignment asks students to use computer databases to find a research article and write a summary. This library assignment encourages students to develop their search and selection skills and gives students an opportunity to immediately incorporate the articles they find into a paper.

Professor Robert Hawkins
Journalism 265: Effects of Mass Communication

A PRÉCIS OF A RESEARCH ARTICLE IN JOURNALISM

The goal of this assignment is to summarize an article presenting research on any aspect of mass communication content, use, or effects. You should concentrate on identifying the main points and conclusions of the research article and surmising the implications of the results obtained.

Picking an Article

1. We encourage you to exercise your library information search skills (you'll need them more again soon for the term paper, among other things) to locate articles you think you would be most interested in. But come up with more than one title to look for: articles are often less (or more) interesting and useful than their titles sound like. But you can also go straight to mass communication journals and leaf through. This isn't as efficient, but what you learn about articles is a lot richer.
2. Your article must come from a research journal and deal with either the content, uses (why, how people/societies use), or the effects of mass communication. Your TA will talk more about this, but you can find examples in *Journalism Quarterly*, *Communication Research*, *Journal of Communication*, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, and *Journal of Consumer Research*. Newspapers, general-audience magazines, and the world-wide web are not appropriate sources.
3. Skim through the article (actually, you should skim at least several to decide). What are they really doing, and is it something you'd like to learn more about? Two qualifications:

- This must be a data-based article (experiment, survey, content analysis, interviews, focus group, case study, etc.). You should not use an essay, literature review, critique, response, meta-analysis, or a piece that only presents theory.
- Just as important: can you understand what they did? If the results have tables with means and percentages, or even correlations, you should be able to figure it out. But if you find equations or tables you can't understand (and some articles will use pretty sophisticated statistics), then move to another one.

Guidelines for Writing
Your final draft should be four paragraphs within the limits of two double-spaced typed pages. (A few articles may be better served by something different than the four-paragraph plan outline below. If yours doesn't fit, think about why it doesn't, what would be better, and then talk with your TA.)

- Heading—your name, ID #, and discussion section #
- Full and correct citation of article. You may use the citation style you find in the references.
- Paragraph one should describe *why* the study was done, and may require you to summarize or prioritize from a number of different issues the author(s) raises. Is it addressing a practical question, describing a phenomenon, clearing up uncertainties from previous research, or testing a theory? Do not repeat every hypothesis verbatim; rather, try to provide a coherent summary of the main ideas.
- Paragraph two should *summarize* what methods were used to test the hypotheses or investigate the research question (What did they do?). Again, verbatim detail is neither expected nor desired. Instead, identify what procedures in general were employed and what characteristics of the sample are relevant.
- Paragraph three should summarize the results of the research (What did they find out?). Again, don't worry about specific details, and certainly don't worry about statistical tests. Instead, try to describe clearly the conclusion of the study.
- Paragraph four should identify the significance or the major implications of the research findings. Beyond restating results, what does this mean? How does it change things?

Please Note
Direct quotes from the article are not appropriate in this assignment; your goal is to summarize rather than to extract specific phrases. Attach a photocopy of the article to your précis. Papers should be expository or argumentative in nature and should be regarded as exercises in scholarly writing for an audience at your own level of research sophistication. Do not write in a breezy conversational style that would characterize a personal narrative.

Please do not leave the writing of your papers to the last minute. Have consideration for your readers so that your ideas may be expressed in clear, succinct, and stylistically appropriate prose.

TA Kelly Bremner's imaginative assignment puts students in the role of a dramaturg and asks them to do library research in response to a particular rhetorical situation—an email from their boss.

Kelly Bremner
Theatre and Drama

A THEATRE AND DRAMA LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT

Assignment 2—15% of final grade

You are interning as a dramaturg for *New Classics*, a theatre company in London. You have been assigned to the upcoming performance of Anouilh's *Antigone* to be directed by the world famous director Sheila Nowslitle. You have received the following e-mail, so please respond to her.

Listen… we are in a bit of a jam on the upcoming production. I understand you can't come over here until you are through with the semester, but I need your help as soon as possible. Maybe with all those great libraries around you can get together a little something for me? My biggest questions at this stage are:

1. What was going on politically in Europe as Anouilh was writing that might have caused him to make the changes from the Sophocles version to his version?
2. What kinds of visual art and music may have influenced Anouilh's play?
3. Should we try a Brechtian approach to the script?

Could you maybe look into one of these questions and send me your findings? Five pages or so will be fine. Oh and could you tell me where you found the information and what kinds of things you were able to find in each source? You're the best!

☺ Sheila

A successful response will involve some research into the topic. You will need to summarize that research and make some suggestions on how that research may help the director interpret the play. You will also need to keep track of what sources you consulted in an annotated bibliography. This requires using MLA form to list the sources (see the MLA Handbook, or the MLA website, or the campus's Writing Center website) and then writing one sentence about what you found in each of them. We will talk more about how to do this in class.

This assignment will come in stages, which I will collect.

Due Date 1 (four weeks before the end of class)—choice of question and one paragraph of preliminary thoughts on the topic (in journal).

Due Date 2 (three weeks before the end of class)—your annotated bibliography so far and your introductory paragraph ending in your thesis statement.

Due Date 3 (two weeks before the end of class)—drafts of your paper, conferencing with your peer groups and professor to follow. You will get your drafts back from me at the conference.

Due Date 4 (last day of class)—final copy of your paper.

Professor Mitra Sharafi immerses students in historical research through this detailed assignment asking students to locate, evaluate, and synthesize multiple primary and secondary sources, beginning with news reportings from a single source, The Times of London.

Professor Mitra Sharafi
Legal Studies 450: Law and Colonialism

A PRIMARY SOURCE PAPER IN LEGAL STUDIES

Description

This assignment aims to introduce you to the challenges of working with original historical sources (i.e. sources written around the time of the event in question), also known as "primary sources." Your Primary Source paper should examine a colonial law-related personality, event, or phenomenon reported in *The Times of London* either during the colonial period or with reference to the colonial period. The *Times* was the leading daily newspaper in Britain and the British Empire from the late eighteenth-century on. It is available online in searchable digital form (1785-1985) and can be accessed via *The Times Digital Archive*, a database to which UW subscribes: infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/0/1/1/purl=rc6_TTDA?sw_aep=wisc_madison.

You can get to *The Times Digital Archive* through MadCat, the UW Library catalogue. In your paper, you must discuss at least three separate *Times* articles that relate to your theme. You should also incorporate at least three secondary sources in your analysis. Secondary sources are publications written long after the event by people (typically scholars) who were not present during the period they are discussing. In general, the more primary and secondary sources you can include in your analysis, the better. You may include additional non-*Times* primary sources in your analysis, but this is strictly optional.

Format and Due Date

Your Primary Source paper should be 8-10 pages long, typed in 12-point font, double-spaced with numbered pages and one-inch margins. It will constitute 30% of your overall grade for the course, and must be submitted electronically via the Digital Dropbox in our Learn@UW course page by midnight on Th, April 10, 2009. If you have questions about the suitability of potential topics for your paper, or would like to discuss the development of your paper at any stage, your instructor is available to meet by appointment. Be sure to document all references by giving full bibliographic information either in footnote/endnote format, or within the text in parenthetical form. Include a bibliography at the end of your paper. The particular citation style you decide to use is your choice. However, your citation format must provide enough information to allow the reader to confirm your references by looking them up in the original sources.

Assessing Your Material

This paper requires you to do more than present a descriptive summary of your *Times* stories. You should start by summarizing the contents of your stories, but then you will be expected to present a thesis and make an argument with reference to this coverage, using evidence and perspectives from your primary and secondary sources. Aim to provide a critical analysis of the *Times* coverage of your topic. What questions and insights does the coverage present regarding law, legal professionals, legal institutions, and colonialism? With what larger discussions and debates does it connect, both among scholars today and at the time the source was written? Discuss issues and challenges relating both to the form (or format) of your newspaper stories and to their content. What do these stories say about the press and the British Empire? Can you identify differing perspectives on your theme? (Hint: "Letters to the Editor" are especially useful here.) Consider the ways in which your analysis may intersect with the course readings. Be sure to look for *Times* obituaries of relevant individuals, and for biographical dictionary entries (see the UK-based *Dictionary of National Biography* and other countries' versions).

Instructors may find this handout useful for teaching students the different methods for citing sources. For examples of different documentation styles (APA, MLA, CBE, etc.), see the Writer's Handbook section of the UW Writing Center website.

The Writing Center
6171 Helen C. White Hall
writing.wisc.edu
263-1992

ACKNOWLEDGING, PARAPHRASING, AND QUOTING SOURCES

When you write at the college level, you often need to integrate material from published sources into your own writing. This means you need to be careful not to plagiarize: "to use and pass off (the ideas or writings of another) as one's own" (*American Heritage Dictionary*) or, in the words of the University of Wisconsin's *Academic Misconduct* guide, to present "the words or ideas of others without giving credit" ("Plagiarism," ¶ 1). The University takes plagiarism seriously, and the penalties can be severe.

This handout is intended to help you use source materials responsibly and avoid plagiarizing by (a) describing the kinds of material you must document; (b) illustrating unsuccessful and successful paraphrases; (c) offering advice on how to paraphrase; and (d) providing guidelines for using direct quotations.

What You Must Document

Quotations	If you use an author's specific word or words, you must place those words within quotation marks and you must credit the source.
Information and Ideas	Even if you use your own words, if you obtained the information or ideas you are presenting from a source, you must document the source. *Information*: If a piece of information isn't common knowledge (see #3 below), you need to provide a source. *Ideas*: An author's ideas may include not only points made and conclusions drawn, but, for instance, a specific method or theory, the arrangement of material, or a list of steps in a process or characteristics of a medical condition. If a source provided any of these, you need to acknowledge the source.
Common Knowledge	You do not need to cite a source for material considered common knowledge. *General common knowledge* is factual information considered to be in the public domain, such as birth and death dates of well-known figures, and generally accepted dates of military, political, literary, and other historical events. In general, factual information contained in multiple standard reference works can usually be considered to be in the public domain. *Field-specific common knowledge* is "common" only within a particular field or specialty. It may include facts, theories, or methods that are familiar to readers within that discipline. For instance, you may not need to cite a reference to Piaget's developmental stages in a paper for an education class or give a source for your description of a commonly used method in a biology report–but you must be sure that this information is so widely known within that field that it will be shared by your readers.

If in doubt, be cautious and cite the source. And in the case of both general and field-specific common knowledge, if you use the exact words of the reference source, you must use quotation marks and credit the source.

The way that you credit your source depends on the documentation system you're using. If you're not sure which documentation system to use, ask the course instructor who assigned your paper. You can pick up a Writing Center handout or check our Web site (www.wisc.edu/writing) for the basics of several commonly used styles (American Political Science Association, APSA; American Psychological Association, APA; Chicago/Turabian; Council of Biology Editors, CBE; Modern Language Association, MLA; and Numbered References).

Sample Paraphrases—Unsuccessful and Successful

Paraphrasing is often defined as putting a passage from an author into "your own words." But what are your own words? How different must your paraphrase be from the original? The paragraphs below provide an example by showing a passage as it appears in the source (A), two paraphrases that follow the source too closely (B and C), and a legitimate paraphrase (D). The student's intention was to incorporate the material in the original passage A into a section of a paper on the concept of "experts" that compared the functions of experts and nonexperts in several professions.

A. The Passage as It Appears in the Source (indented to indicate a lengthy direct quotation)

Critical care nurses function in a hierarchy of roles. In this open heart surgery unit, the nurse manager hires and fires the nursing personnel. The nurse manager does not directly care for patients but follows the progress of unusual or long-term patients. On each shift a nurse assumes the role of resource nurse. This person oversees the hour-by-hour functioning of the unit as a whole, such as considering expected admissions and discharges of patients, ascertaining that beds are available for patients in the operating room, and covering sick calls. Resource nurses also take a patient assignment. They are the most experienced of all the staff nurses. The nurse clinician has a separate job description and provides for quality of care by orienting new staff, developing unit policies, and providing direct support where needed, such as assisting in emergency situations. The clinical nurse specialist in this unit is mostly involved with formal teaching in orienting new staff. The nurse manager, nurse clinician, and clinical nurse specialist are the designated experts. They do not take patient assignments. The resource nurse is seen as both a caregiver and a resource to other caregivers. . . . Staff nurses have a hierarchy of seniority. . . . Staff nurses are assigned to patients to provide all their nursing care. (Chase, 1995, p. 156)

B. Word-for-Word Plagiarism

Critical care nurses have a hierarchy of roles. The nurse manager hires and fires nurses. S/he does not directly care for patients but does follow unusual or long-term cases. On each shift a resource nurse attends to the functioning of the unit as a whole, such as making sure beds are available in the operating room, and also has a patient assignment. The nurse clinician orients new staff, develops policies, and provides support where needed. The clinical nurse specialist also orients new staff, mostly by formal teaching. The nurse manager, nurse clinician, and clinical nurse specialist, as the designated experts, do not take patient assignments. The resource nurse is not only a caregiver but a resource to the other caregivers. Within the staff nurses there is also a hierarchy of seniority. Their job is to give assigned patients all their nursing care.

Notice that the writer has not only "borrowed" Chase's material (the results of her research) with no acknowledgment, but has also largely maintained the author's method of expression and sentence structure. The underlined phrases are directly copied from the source or changed only slightly in form. Even if the student-writer had acknowledged Chase as the source of the content, the language of the passage would be considered plagiarized because no quotation marks indicate the phrases that come directly from Chase. And if quotation marks did appear around all these phrases, this paragraph would be so cluttered that it would be unreadable.

C. A Patchwork Paraphrase

Chase (1995) described how nurses in a critical care unit <u>function in a hierarchy</u> that places <u>designated experts</u> at the top and the least senior staff nurses at the bottom. The experts--the nurse manager, nurse clinician, and clinical nurse specialist--are not involved directly in patient care. The staff nurses, in contrast, <u>are assigned to patients</u> and <u>provide all their nursing care</u>. Within the staff nurses is a <u>hierarchy of seniority</u> in which the most senior can become resource nurses: they are assigned a patient but also serve as <u>a resource to other caregivers</u>. The experts have administrative and teaching tasks such as selecting and <u>orienting new staff, developing unit policies</u>, and giving hands-on <u>support where needed</u>.

This paraphrase is a patchwork composed of pieces in the original author's language (underlined) and pieces in the student-writer's words, all rearranged into a new pattern, but with none of the borrowed pieces in quotation marks. Thus, even though the writer acknowledges the source of the material, the underlined phrases are falsely presented as the student's own.

D. A Legitimate Paraphrase

In her study of the roles of nurses in a critical care unit, Chase (1995) also found a hierarchy that distinguished the roles of experts and others. Just as the educational experts described above do not directly teach students, the experts in this unit do not directly attend to patients. That is the role of the staff nurses, who, like teachers, have their own "hierarchy of seniority" (p. 156). The roles of the experts include employing unit nurses and overseeing the care of special patients (nurse manager), teaching and otherwise integrating new personnel into the unit (clinical nurse specialist and nurse clinician), and policy-making (nurse clinician). In an intermediate position in the hierarchy is the resource nurse, a staff nurse with more experience than the others, who assumes direct care of patients as the other staff nurses do, but also takes on tasks to ensure the smooth operation of the entire facility.

The writer has documented Chase's material and specific language (by direct reference to the author and by quotation marks around language taken directly from the source). Notice too that the writer has modified Chase's language and structure and has added material to fit the new context and purpose—to present the distinctive functions of experts and nonexperts in several professions.

Perhaps you've noticed that a number of phrases from the original passage appear in the legitimate paraphrase in D above: *critical care*, *staff nurses*, *nurse manager*, *clinical nurse specialist*, *nurse clinician*, *resource nurse*. If all these were underlined, the paraphrase would look much like the "patchwork" in example C. The difference is that the phrases in D are all precise, economical, and conventional designations that are part of the shared language within the nursing discipline (in B and C, they're underlined only when used within a longer borrowed phrase). In every discipline and in certain genres (such as the empirical research report), some phrases are so specialized or conventional that you can't paraphrase them except by wordy and awkward circumlocutions that would be less familiar (and thus less readable) to the audience. When you repeat such phrases, you're not stealing the unique phrasing of an individual writer, but using a common vocabulary shared by a community of scholars.

Some Examples of Shared Language You Don't Need to Put in Quotation Marks

Conventional designations: e.g., physician's assistant, chronic low-back pain

Preferred bias-free language: e.g., persons with disabilities

Technical terms and phrases of a discipline or genre: e.g., reduplication, cognitive domain, material culture, sexual harassment

How to Paraphrase

General Advice

1. When reading a passage, try first to understand it as a whole, rather than pausing to write down specific ideas or phrases.
2. Be selective. Unless your assignment is to do a formal or "literal" paraphrase,* you usually don't need to paraphrase an entire passage; instead, choose and summarize the material that helps you make a point in your paper.
3. Think of what "your own words" would be if you were telling someone who's unfamiliar with your subject (your mother, your brother, a friend) what the original source said.
4. Remember that you can use direct quotations of phrases from the original within your paraphrase and that you don't need to change or put quotation marks around shared language (see box above).

*See Spatt (1999), pp. 99-103; paraphrase is used in this handout in the more common sense of a summary-paraphrase or what Spatt calls a "free paraphrase" (p. 103).

Methods of Paraphrasing

1. **Look away from the source; then write.**
   Read the text you want to paraphrase several times—until you feel that you understand it and can use your own words to restate it to someone else. Then, look away from the original and rewrite the text in your own words.

2. **Take notes**.
   Take abbreviated notes; set the notes aside; **then paraphrase from the notes** a day or so later, or when you draft.

If you find that you can't do 1 or 2, this may mean that you don't understand the passage completely or that you need to use a more structured process until you have more experience in paraphrasing. The method below is not only a way to create a paraphrase but also a way to understand a difficult text.

3. **While looking at the source, first change the structure, then the words.**
   For example, consider the following passage from *Love and Toil* (a book on motherhood in London from 1870 to 1918), in which the author, Ellen Ross, puts forth one of her major arguments:

Love and Toil maintains that family survival was the mother's main charge among the large majority of London's population who were poor or working class; the emotional and intellectual nurture of her child or children and even their actual comfort were forced into the background. To mother was to work for and organize household subsistence. (p. 9)

a) Change the structure.
Begin by starting at a different place in the passage and/or sentence(s), basing your choice on the focus of your paper. This will lead naturally to some changes in wording. Some places you might start in the passage above are “The mother’s main charge,” “Among the . . . poor or working class,” “Working for and organizing household subsistence,” or “The emotional and intellectual nurture.” Or you could begin with one of the people the passage is about: “Mothers,” “A mother,” “Children,” “A child.” Focusing on specific people rather than abstractions will make your paraphrase more readable.

At this stage, you might also break up long sentences, combine short ones, expand phrases for clarity, or shorten them for conciseness, or you might do this in an additional step. In this process, you’ll naturally eliminate some words and change others.

Here’s one of the many ways you might get started with a paraphrase of the passage above by changing its structure. In this case, the focus of the paper is the effect of economic status on children at the turn of the century, so the writer begins with *children*:

> Children of the poor at the turn of the century received little if any emotional or intellectual nurturing from their mothers, whose main charge was family survival. Working for and organizing household subsistence were what defined mothering. Next to this, even the children’s basic comfort was forced into the background (Ross, 1995).

Now you’ve succeeded in changing the structure, but the passage still contains many direct quotations, so you need to go on to the second step.

b) Change the words.
Use synonyms or a phrase that expresses the same meaning.
Leave shared language (box, p. 3) unchanged.

It’s important to start by changing the structure, not the words, but you might find that as you change the words, you see ways to change the structure further. The final paraphrase might look like this:

According to Ross (1993), poor children at the turn of the century received little mothering in our sense of the term. Mothering was defined by economic status, and among the poor, a mother’s foremost responsibility was not to stimulate her children’s minds or foster their emotional growth but to provide food and shelter to meet the basic requirements for physical survival. Given the magnitude of this task, children were deprived of even the “actual comfort” (p. 9) we expect mothers to provide today.

You may need to go through this process several times to create a satisfactory paraphrase.

Using Direct Quotations

Use direct quotations only if you have a good reason. Most of your paper should be in your own words.

> Reasons for Quoting
>
> - To show that an authority supports your point
> - To present a position or argument to critique or comment on
> - To include especially moving or historically significant language
> - To present a particularly well-stated passage
> - whose meaning would be lost or changed if paraphrased or summarized

Introducing Quotations

One of your jobs as a writer is to guide your reader through your text. Don’t simply drop quotations into your paper and leave it to the reader to make connections. Integrating a quotation into your text usually involves two elements:

- A signal that a quotation is coming—generally the author’s name and/or a reference to the work
- An assertion that indicates the relationship of the quotation to your text

Often both the signal and the assertion appear in a single introductory statement, as in the example below. Notice how a transitional phrase also serves to connect the quotation smoothly to the introductory statement.

> Ross (1993), in her study of poor and working-class mothers in London from 1870-1918 [signal], makes it clear that economic status to a large extent determined the meaning of motherhood [assertion]. Among this population [connection], "To mother was to work for and organize household subsistence" (p. 9).

The signal can also come after the assertion, again with a connecting word or phrase:

> Illness was rarely a routine matter in the nineteenth century [assertion]. As [connection] Ross observes [signal], "Maternal thinking about children's health revolved around the possibility of a child's maiming or death" (p. 166).

Formatting Quotations

Incorporate *short direct prose* quotations into the text of your paper and enclose them in double quotation marks, as in the examples above. Begin *longer quotations* (for instance, in the APA system, 40 words or more) on a new line and indent the entire quotation (i.e., put in block form), *with no quotation marks at beginning or end*, as in the quoted passage from Chase on p. 2, A. Rules about the minimum length of block quotations, how many spaces to indent, and whether to single- or double-space extended quotations vary with different documentation systems; check the guidelines for the system you're using.

Punctuation with Quotation Marks

1. Parenthetical citations. With short quotations, place citations outside of closing quotation marks, followed by sentence punctuation (period, question mark, comma, semi-colon, colon):

Menand (2002) characterizes language as "a social weapon" (p. 115).

With block quotations, check the guidelines for the documentation system you are using. For APA, used in this handout, see sample A on p. 2, and sample C (the quotation from Ross) on p. 4.

2. Commas and periods. Place inside closing quotation marks when no parenthetical citation follows:

Hertzberg (2002) notes that "treating the Constitution as imperfect is not new," but because of Dahl's credentials, his "apostasy merits attention" (p. 85).

3. Semi-colons and colons. Place outside of closing quotation marks (or after a parenthetical citation).

4. Question marks and exclamation points.

Place inside closing quotation marks if the quotation is a question/exclamation:

Menand (2001) acknowledges that H. W. Fowler's Modern English Usage is "a classic of the language," but he asks, "Is it a dead classic?" (p. 114). [Note that a period still follows the closing parenthesis.]

Place outside of closing quotation marks if the entire sentence containing the quotation is a question or exclamation:

How many students actually read the guide to find out what is meant by "academic misconduct"?

5. Quotations within quotations. Use single quotation marks for the embedded quotation:

According to Hertzberg (2002), Dahl gives the U. S. Constitution "bad marks in 'democratic fairness' and 'encouraging consensus'" (p. 90). [The phrases "democratic fairness" and "encouraging consensus" are already in quotation marks in Dahl's sentence.]

Indicating Changes in Quotations

Use *ellipsis* points (. . .) to indicate an omission *within* a quotation–but not at the beginning or end unless it's not obvious that you're quoting only a portion of the whole.

Within quotations, use *square brackets* [ ] (not parentheses) to add your own clarification, comment, or correction. Use [sic] (meaning "so" or "thus") to indicate that a mistake is in the source you're quoting and is not your own.

Some Useful Sources on Paraphrasing and Summarizing

American heritage dictionary of the English language (4th ed.). (2000). Retrieved January 7, 2002, from www.bartleby.com/61/.

Bazerman, C. (1995). *The informed writer: Using sources in the disciplines* (5th ed). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Leki, I. (1995). *Academic writing: Exploring processes and strategies* (2nd ed.) New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 185-211.

Spatt, B. (1999). *Writing from sources* (5th ed.) New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 98-119; 364-371.

References

Chase, S. K. (1995). The social context of critical care clinical judgment. *Heart and Lung*, 24, 154-162.

Hertzberg, H. (2002, July 29). Framed up: What the Constitution gets wrong [Review of R. A. Dahl, *How democratic is the Constitution?*]. *New Yorker*, pp. 85-90.

Menand, L. (2002, November 26). Slips of the tongue [Review of J. McMorris, *The warden of English: The life of H. W. Fowler*]. *New Yorker*, pp. 112-116.

Ross, E. (1993). *Love and toil: Motherhood in outcast London*, 1870-1918. New York: Oxford University Press.

Spatt, B. (1999). *Writing from sources* (5th ed.). New York: St. Martin's Press.

University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2002, October 1). *Academic misconduct: Guide for students*. Retrieved November 10, 2002, from http://www.wisc.edu/students/amsum.htm.

TEACHING ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

In a Comm-B assessment study, students reported that they were generally unsatisfied with the oral component of their Comm-B courses. Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek offers some strategies for designing a formal oral communication component as part of your Comm-B course curriculum.

Rebecca Schoenike Nowacek
Writing Across the Curriculum

INCORPORATING THE ORAL COMMUNICATION COMPONENT

In order to meet the oral communication requirements of Comm-B courses, many instructors encourage students to participate in class discussions and sometimes require students to lead class discussions. Such active participation in class discussion encourages students to think critically about course material and to synthesize this new material with their previously-held beliefs and knowledge.

Instructors frequently overlook, however, the benefits of more formal types of oral communication assignments. Formal oral communication assignments do not replace, but instead supplement, the more informal, daily types of oral participation that most instructors already seek to facilitate in their classes. The value of these more formal assignments is not simply that students will leave Comm-B and writing-intensive courses better equipped to articulate their ideas in formal and professional contexts. Although that ability can be extremely valuable for students in the long run, formal speaking assignments can also be immediately valuable for students and course instructors. How? In order to speak formally, students generally need to prepare their thoughts in advance, and in doing so they increase the time they spend reading and mastering course material outside the classroom.

In short, different types of speaking assignments—like different writing assignments—encourage different levels of formality and out-of-class preparation. The list below is intended to suggest the range of purposes oral communication assignments might serve in your course.

High Degree of Formality and Out-of-Class Preparation

- Debate
- Trial
- Presentation of research results

These assignments, particularly the in-class debates and trials, encourage students to think carefully about choosing convincing evidence, presenting it persuasively, and anticipating counter-arguments—concerns that can also assist them when writing papers. If you choose to give these types of assignments, you might build in a way to reflect on these issues. Formal presentations, often made during the final weeks of classes, can also lead students to reflect on what types of evidence are most convincing. But beware, if your students don't have much experience with formal in-class presentations and have received little coaching about how to compose and deliver an effective presentation, you may be disappointed with the quality of the presentations. In order to avoid such disappointments, be sure to *build in time* and *guidelines for preparation* and be prepared to establish for students the structure of a debate, trial, or formal presentation.

Significant Degree of Formality and Out-of-Class Preparation

- Student- or group-led discussions on readings, writings, or other course material
- Role-play
- Performance

Many instructors require students to lead discussion for a class period, finding that it increases their mastery of the material and their commitment to participating actively in discussions. Most students, however, are not experienced in leading discussions and will benefit from meeting with you beforehand to discuss their plans. Another oral communication assignment that encourages significant out-of-class preparation is a role-playing assignment: each student takes on the perspective of a particular philosophy, historical figure, character, theorist, or author. The entire class, then, works together to put those perspectives in dialogue—an exercise particularly valuable at the end of a unit or semester. Some instructors choose more academic settings for these role-plays (like a town hall meeting or professional think-tank) and others choose less academic but perhaps more familiar settings (like a daytime talk show). Whatever the setting, many instructors find it useful to guide students' preparation with a worksheet that guides students to consider various dimensions of their author/character/philosophy and find that they need to serve as a moderator to make sure all students are participating. Finally, some instructors choose to assign a short passage of a book or play, requiring students to make—and clearly represent—choices about how to interpret that particular passage. These performance assignments are generally most successful when the instructor has already guided students in a comparative analysis of different actors or directors interpreting passages.

Relatively Small Degree of Formality and Little Out-of-Class Preparation

- Peer review groups in which students share drafts and give each other oral feedback
- Small-group discussion
- “Work in progress” presentations (one to two minutes) to present paper topics, new ideas, or interesting research to the entire class
- Open mic readings of finished work to share and to celebrate work accomplished

These assignments, because they are less formal, are often considerably less stressful for students and may be incorporated into classroom activities on a more regular basis. Although most students need to learn to work successfully in peer review groups, almost all students are easily able to participate in small-group discussions or give two-minute presentations to inform their fellow students about some aspect of their research. Through such work, students learn from one another and build relationships. Students who are feeling blocked or stuck in their writing often find that hearing about other students’ papers helps them to generate their own ideas. Similarly, student presenters can often clarify their own ideas significantly when they attempt to communicate them orally to their peers. Regular participation in oral activities like these may also help students feel more prepared to undertake more formal speaking assignments.

Almost No Formality or Out-of-Class Preparation

- Participation in class discussion
- Sharing journals or informal writing in class

These most common activities are the foundation of all other oral communication assignments and serve not only to develop oral communication skills, but critical thinking skills as well. Although some students are reluctant to participate in discussions, by talking with students about their preferences (Do they prefer to be called on even when they don’t have a hand up? Will they commit to volunteering a comment at least once a week in order to avoid being called on? Do they prefer to read from a journal rather than speak impromptu?) and facilitating a respectful classroom environment, instructors can encourage even the most reluctant students to join the classroom conversations—a benefit for them and for the class as a whole.

Cris Ruggiero, an experienced TA in Political Science, asked students to participate in the weekly evaluation of their class discussion contributions. This model helps students see how their participation grades contribute to their overall grade for the course.

Cris Ruggiero
Political Science 452: Criminal Law

PARTICIPATION GRADING SHEET

Name: ____

Discussion Section Day/Time: _________________________

Regular attendance and active participation are a necessary part of your success in this class. Since you know about your own level of participation, you have the opportunity to provide input regarding your discussion section score. At the end of each discussion, you will assign a grade to your participation for that day. Your instructor will either agree or disagree with the score and adjust it accordingly. Please note that she will determine your final score.

Please fill in your suggested score (whole numbers only) based upon the following scale. In addition, **briefly** list a rationale for your score, if you wish to do so. After taking into account your input, your instructor will fill in the final score.

3: **Excellent participation**—fully prepared for class, completed assigned readings, participated actively and thoughtfully in small group and class discussions, listened actively, allowed/encouraged others to contribute in class, arrived on time

2: **Good participation**—fully prepared for class, completed assigned readings, listened actively, participated in small group activities, arrived on time

1: **Poor participation**—unprepared for class, did not do the assigned reading or minimal or no participation in small group activities <u>or</u> did not pay attention or listen actively <u>or</u> did not arrive on time.

0: **No Participation**—Did not show up.

Date	Suggested Score	Rationale for Score	Final Score

1st Midterm Exam	2nd Exam	Final Exam	Participation Grade

TA Cassie Chambliss uses a mock trial assignment to structure a detailed exploration of a particular text and to help students learn to make persuasive arguments about literature. These guidelines do not contain the "charge" of the trial. Chambliss guides the students to determine this themselves during class discussion.

Cassie Chambliss
African Languages and Literature 201

MOCK TRIAL ASSIGNMENT

This assignment will give you opportunities to

- articulate persuasive arguments about literature
- give textual evidence in support of your arguments
- predict and account for counter-arguments
- create interpretive presentations of literary characters
- consider perspectives other than your own
- characterize the audience of your arguments
- prioritize arguments and evidence
- articulate the qualities of a good argument
- evaluate arguments and interpretations presented by other students
- suggest ways to strengthen arguments presented during the trial

Instructions

- Each group will have to communicate outside of class and discussion to prepare for the trial.
- Be creative in your presentation of arguments.
- The text—Sindiwe Magona's *Living, Loving, and Lying Awake at Night*—will be the ultimate authority.
- Watch a movie or TV show that portrays a trial scene and decide what strategies could be useful to you.
- I will be happy to meet with some or all of your group if you'd like feedback on preparing your case.
- Make sure you get the names and contact numbers of all the members of your group.

Schedule of Trial Events

<u>February 23/24</u> - One week before the trial
On this day each side will present the following to each of the other groups:

- e-mail a copy to the class list on or before the date above
- turn in a hard copy to me during discussion that week

Prosecution and Defense:

- list of main arguments
- list of witnesses
- roles that each member of the group will play

NOTE: Every person in the group must have a role, but you may possibly have more than one role depending on the number of lawyers and witnesses your group decides to use.

The Jury:

- list of criteria that will be used in judging each argument
- list of key questions/issues the jury thinks should be addressed during the trial in order to determine the guilt or innocence of the defendant

<u>March 2/3</u> - The Day of the Trial
The Clerks for each group will enforce these time limits.

- 15 minutes: Prosecution: presentation of arguments and witnesses
- 15 minutes: Defense: presentation of arguments and witnesses
- 5 minutes: Prosecution: cross-examination of defense witnesses or return to prosecution witnesses for rebuttal
- 5 minutes: Defense: cross-examination of prosecution witnesses or return to defense witnesses for rebuttal
- 10 minutes: jury: open discussion among jurors with the option of questioning anyone from the defense or the prosecution

<u>March 16/17</u> - Closing Arguments and Jury Vote

- 5 minutes: Prosecution: summary of arguments and closing statements
- 5 minutes: Defense: summary of arguments and closing statements
- 5 minutes: jury: restatement or re-opening of questions, discussion among jurors
- 10 minutes: jury: vote with explanation and comments on effectiveness of arguments

Trial Roles

The Charge
To be suggested by students in each section and finalized by me.

Prosecution
This group is responsible for articulating the charges against the defendant. You must define the arguments that form the basis of the (legal/moral/criminal?) charge and introduce witnesses to provide evidence in support of these arguments. You will also need to predict the counter-arguments of the defense in order to prepare witnesses to testify against the defendant, and to prepare questions for the witnesses of the defense. In order to fulfill these responsibilities, you will choose people from your group for the following roles:

Lawyers—Two or more; the lawyers will address the jury, presenting the arguments and questioning witnesses in order to convince the jury of the defendant's guilt.

Witnesses—These may be characters from the stories in *Living, Loving, and Lying Awake at Night* or characters from other related stories/films used in this course. Prosecution witnesses will be questioned by the lawyers for the prosecution and for the defense, so you will have to develop an interpretive presentation of the character that is consistent with the arguments of the prosecution AND based on the text.

Clerk—One person (who may act as a lawyer or witness as well) should be responsible for 1) making sure everyone participates both during out-of-class meetings and during the trial, and 2) keeping the entire prosecution team within the time limits for their presentation. The Clerk can help the group prioritize arguments and make the best use of the limited time.

Defense
This group is responsible for articulating arguments for the innocence of the defendant. You must define arguments in opposition to the initial charge against the defendant, and introduce witnesses who can give evidence in support of these arguments. You will also need to predict arguments the prosecution might use against the defendant and other witnesses in order to prepare them to testify, and in order to prepare questions for the witnesses of the prosecution. In order to fulfill these responsibilities, you will choose people from your group for the following roles:

Lawyers—Two or more; the lawyers will address the jury, presenting the arguments and questioning witnesses in order to convince the jury of the defendant's innocence.

Witnesses—These may be characters from the stories in *Living, Loving, and Lying Awake at Night*, or characters from other related stories/films used in this course. Prosecution witnesses will be questioned by the lawyers for the prosecution and for the defense, so you will have to develop an interpretive presentation of the character that is consistent with the arguments of the defense AND based on the text.

Clerk—One person (who may act as a lawyer or witness as well) should be responsible for 1) making sure everyone participates both during out-of-class meetings and during the trial, and 2) keeping the entire defense team within the time limits for their presentation. The Clerk can help the group prioritize arguments and make the best use of the limited time.

Jury
This group will be the audience for all arguments presented in the trial. You will be responsible for evaluating the arguments presented by the prosecution and the defense in order to determine the guilt or innocence of the defendant. To accomplish the task, jury members must

- Develop a set of criteria for judging the effectiveness and merit of the arguments and evidence presented by the prosecution and defense teams.
- Prepare questions for witnesses and lawyers from both sides in anticipation of the arguments they will make. The jury will have time to pose any questions not already addressed after both sides have presented their arguments.
- Vote on the outcome of the trial according to the established criteria, NOT based on knowledge of the characters from reading and personal opinion.
- Suggest to the prosecution and defense teams evidence or methods that would have made their arguments more effective.
- Assign a Clerk—one person to be responsible for 1) making sure everyone participates both during out-of-class meetings and during the trial, and 2) keeping the entire jury within the time limits for their presentation.

Elisabeth Miller offers an oral communication assignment that has students present their ideas as their research and writing is still in-progress. By giving students time to receive feedback from their peers, this assignment creates a lively, generative classroom space.

Elisabeth Miller
English 201

WORKS IN PROGRESS PRESENTATIONS

I hate to admit it, but I came to dread student presentations in my composition courses. Students, though, were doing what I asked of them: sharing their capstone research projects, talking for 8-10 minutes, clicking through clear PowerPoint slides. Under these conditions, though, of reporting already completed research, for the sake of sharing, even the richest research topics flattened and dulled.

In contrast, I wanted students to learn to concisely share the highlights of the findings and challenges in their work, to engage in a real discussion about their successes and stumbling blocks—and to get feedback from peers (and even to hear about other peers' work) while they were still in the middle of their projects and could make substantive changes.

Based on these new goals, I began assigning "Works in Progress Presentations." Here's an example assignment sheet that I gave out to English 201: Intermediate Writing students. Students presented on their in-progress research about 3 weeks before the final due date for a several-week ethnographic research and writing project:

Works in Progress Presentations: Assignment Sheet

You will be presenting your in-progress ethnographic research projects in class. For **3-5 minutes (no more—I'm timing you and will cut you off at 5 minutes)**, explain the following:

- your research site and what's interesting about it
- your positionality in relation to that site and how it might affect your research and writing
- what claim you're making about that site and what key evidence you're using to support that claim
- especially useful secondary sources you've found (or what you wish you could find)
- and—this is most important!—a couple of questions that you'd like to discuss or get advice about from the group

Example questions might include "Does my main claim make sense to you? What evidence would you need to believe me?" "I've gotten stuck finding secondary research about x; does anyone have any ideas on where else to look—or what other secondary research might help to support my ethnography?" "I'm having a hard time organizing my primary data and secondary research into a coherent whole. Does anyone have any organizational tips for this project?"

As your fellow students present, jot down notes on their research, the questions they have, and the ideas and questions you have for them. After 3 or 4 students present, we'll have a brief, 5 – 10-minute Q&A session.

You will be graded on the clarity of your explanation of your project, thoughtfulness of your explanation and questions, and thoughtfulness of responses to your fellow classmates. Try to avoid too many "ahs" and "uhms," maintain eye contact with the group, and just talk to us like you're having a conversation. But since this is not a formal speaking course, you will not be graded on your delivery style.

This exercise is designed to 1) provide you with useful feedback as you're in the middle of your research and writing, 2) give you practice clearly, concisely describing your work—a useful skill in college, graduate school, and future careers, and 3) offer you a chance to share your interesting work and to be inspired by the work of others as we all share challenges and ideas.

Results

I've consistently been impressed with the way students have risen to the challenge of concisely explaining and asking generative questions about their in-progress work. What's more, unlike my previous experiences with slow, repetitious presentation class sessions, I've found these days to be some of the liveliest of all semester. Even some of my usually quiet classrooms have sprung into rich discussions as students pose thoughtful questions to one another, suggest research strategies, help one another refine central claims, and share drafting strategies.

In these speech assignments, Professor Greg Downey gives his students the opportunity to practice a range of oral communication skills and to receive valuable feedback throughout the semester.

Professor Greg Downey
Library and Information Studies 201

PREPARED AND EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEECH ASSIGNMENTS IN A COMMUNICATION-B COURSE

Practicing oral communication skills is an important part of a Comm-B course. In LIS 201 you will perform two in-class presentations: one prepared four-minute speech, and one extemporaneous (unrehearsed) two-minute response to another student's speech. Each of these will be based on your readings for that week. Your TA will assign you a week and a particular reading for both your prepared speech and your extemporaneous speech. However, you will not be told when your extemporaneous speech is scheduled. If you have an unexcused absence on the day that your prepared or extemporaneous speech is due, you forfeit the points for that assignment.

Prepared speech

The prepared speech is a four-minute summary and critique of one of the articles your class is discussing from the course reader that week.

You should devote the first part of your presentation (2 minutes) to identifying the main arguments of the reading, outlining the author's claims, reasons, and evidence. You do not have to go into great detail (since all students will have read the article) but you do have to provide an accurate summary.

The rest of your presentation (2 minutes) should deal with your reaction to the reading. You need to make your own claim and your reason for that claim, providing evidence to support it. Like a good paper, your talk needs a short introduction and a satisfying conclusion.

Do not read your presentation! You may speak from simple notes that keep you on track, but allow the words to emerge spontaneously and conversationally. A good strategy is to practice your presentation in front of a mirror, a voice recorder, or a friend.

While you are making your presentation, your TA will designate a fellow student to record you on a little digital video camera. Later, your TA will post this video on the discussion section wiki page for the reading you reviewed. You are required to view your performance and perform a self-critique: email your TA with one way that you could improve your delivery next time.

Extemporaneous speech

The extemporaneous speech is a two-minute reaction to another student's prepared speech.

Your reply should both acknowledge what your fellow student said about the article (1 minute) and then critique what that student said, offering your own ideas (1 minute).

Remember, though, that "critique" doesn't necessarily mean "criticize." Explain whether you agree or disagree with the student's assessment of the article, and why. Or you may suggest a different way of understanding or interpreting the article, contrasting it with what the first student said.

This is not an easy assignment—you only have two minutes. Try to be constructive, civil, and, above all, concise.

Evaluation criteria for speeches:
All TAs use the same oral presentation grading sheet and grade your speeches according to both content and delivery.

Content:

- Do you accurately capture what the author (or previous speaker) was saying?
- Is your own claim clear?
- Is your evidence for your claim convincing?

Delivery:

- Have you kept to the time specified?
- Are you loud enough to be heard?
- Does your inflection and emphasis help convey your meaning (as in normal conversation)?
- Are you, like, avoiding the use of slang and, basically, all those crutch phrases like "like" and "basically"?
- Do you seem to be enjoying yourself (even if you aren't)!

Ignite presentation

Besides completing a written review of your book, one of your assignments is to take an idea from this book and communicate it using a five-minute narrated slideshow.

Preparing and narrating a slideshow:

There are many ways to use slideshow programs like Microsoft PowerPoint or Apple Keynote effectively. There are even more ways to use them ineffectively. You will use a very scripted and effective format for that slideshow, called “Ignite.”

In an Ignite presentation, you have a pre-set amount of time to work through a pre-set number of slides, each of which advances automatically. So if you get five minutes for your presentation, you get 20 slides, which cross the screen at a rate of one every 15 seconds.

Usually in an Ignite presentation, people try to choose slides with interesting images or charts on them, and talk their way through explaining each one in turn. This avoids the common slideshow pitfall of simply creating slides full of words and then reading the words out loud.

Most modern slide programs have a feature allowing you to record an audio narration to a slideshow. Such programs can often be set to auto-advance the slides after a predetermined number of seconds. (Or you may use a friend’s help to click the “next slide” button at the appropriate time.) Don’t worry if at the end you’re a little under or over five minutes.

Uploading your slideshow:

After you have recorded your slideshow, upload it to your discussion section wiki and place a link to it on your personal wiki page. Then spend some time watching the shows of your classmates to decide which one you like the best!

In Professor Jenell Johnson's Theory and Practice of Argumentation and Debate course, students engage in low-stakes dialogues as a way to practice and prepare for an end-of-semester formal debate.

Professor Jenell Johnson
Communication Arts 262

SCAFFOLDING ORAL PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENTS IN COMMUNICATION ARTS

Assignment 1: Civil Dialogue

Assignment Objectives

- To identify and construct extemporaneous cogent arguments
- To employ formal and informal forms of evidence
- To engage in a dialogue on a relevant political controversy with other classmates
- To sharpen extemporaneous oral communication skills in preparation for the debate

Based on the work of Boal and Plato, John Genette created an interactive dialogue model where participants respond to statements and situate themselves on a continuum of strongly agree to strongly disagree. Once situated, participants engage in a dialogue with each other by providing arguments for their position, asking questions of others' positions, and listening.

The Procedure

This is largely an extemporaneous assignment, which means that you will not need to do extensive preparation to engage in the civil dialogue. The dialogues will all pertain to social or political controversies about which an average citizen will already have some basic knowledge and opinion.

On dialogue day, the group will participate in a dialogue about a statement read by your TA. You will come to the front of the classroom and locate yourself on the continuum (strongly agree, somewhat agree, undecided, neutral, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree). Once you are seated at the front, you will each begin with an opening argument of about 1-2 minutes in length that defends the position you have taken in relation to the statement. Ideally, you will be defending what you actually believe, but if you have ended up with a position you don't fully believe in, please defend it to the best of your ability.

You will then each ask a question of one of the other speakers, and each speaker should answer one question from another speaker. You may ask and answer more than one question.

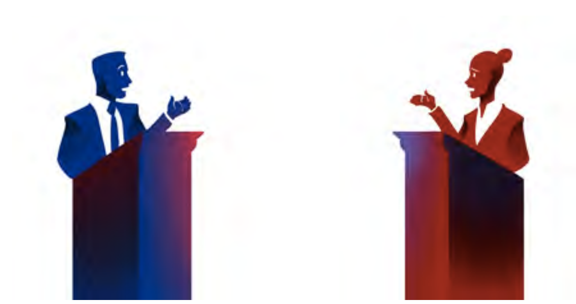
The rest of you will be audience members. After the first round of questions and answers, audience members should also ask questions, but only speakers in the dialogue should provide answers and arguments. After audience members ask questions, each speaker will offer a 1-2 minute closing statement indicating her/his position on the statement at the conclusion of the dialogue (note: it may change).

While this assignment is not graded per se, it constitutes a significant part your participation grade in section and your experience forms the foundation for the second paper.

Assignment 2: Final Debates (15% of final grade)

Assignment Objectives

- to demonstrate your grasp of theories of argument
- to apply these principles by advancing arguments related to your debate proposition
- to demonstrate argumentative flexibility and rebuttal skills
- to demonstrate public speaking and extemporaneous delivery skills



You will spend the final weeks of the semester participating in researched, prepared final debates. These debates will give you the opportunity to put into practice nearly all of the concepts, theories, and skills we have discussed throughout the semester. This handout provides an overview of the final debate assignment and the annotated bibliography. We'll offer more detail in lecture and in section, but if you have any questions at any point between now and the end of the term, please ask one of us. You will have a chance to practice the debate format in the middle of the semester on a proposition chosen by your TA. You will keep the same groups for the final debate, but may change up the teams if you'd like.

It is up to you whether you'd like to use a competitive or collaborative frame for this debate: in other words, if competitive, teams should not share information. If collaborative, it is fine to share information with one another, with the goal of reaching some kind of consensus.

Groups

Each section will be divided by the instructor into three groups of six (groups may vary in size slightly depending on section enrollment). Lecture time in the last three weeks is set aside for the debates (the specific schedule and location for each debate day will be announced and posted by your TA). Keep track of when and where your section's debates will be taking place. Once assigned into groups, each group must subdivide itself into affirmative and negative teams, which will argue for or against the debate proposition. If there is an odd number of people in your group, then the extra person should be placed on the affirmative team, since the affirmative team has the burden of proof.

Debate Structure

Each day's debate will consist of oral presentations and a question-and-answer session. The format is as follows: The first debater on the affirmative team will deliver a 5-minute oral presentation; the first debater on the negative team will deliver a 4-minute oral presentation; each subsequent debater will deliver a 4 minute oral presentation, alternating between affirmative and negative. Again, if you happen to be a group of 5, you will have three members on the affirmative team.

<u>It is crucial to stay within the time limit.</u> The oral presentations should be delivered <u>semi-extemporaneously</u>. This means that the presentations should be a combination of prepared material and flexible structure. That is, you should be flexible enough in your presentation so that you can respond to what others have said (with the exception of the first speaker), but you should prepare your arguments so that you are not speaking solely off the cuff. In other words, you should prepare a presentation, but you may want to place greater or lesser emphasis on some points depending on the flow of the debate. Ideally, <u>you will prepare more arguments than you plan to use in the debate</u>, and then select the arguments that seem most important based on the other team's arguments. When you are not speaking, you should be paying careful attention and taking notes so that you can advise team members. While it is OK to consult with each other, please be <u>very quiet</u> while the other group is speaking so as not to distract them. And, of course, if you're not paying attention to the other team, it will be very difficult to rebut their arguments.

And rebutting is, of course, what we're after. You should aim for as much clash as possible during the debate—this is not meant to be a series of six small speeches, but an organic, dialectical conversation. You are talking *to* one another, not *at* your classmates.

Working with Your Team and Group Members

Once you've selected a debate topic and proposition and divided yourselves into affirmative and negative teams, you will work with your team members to develop an overall strategy or case, plan the first speaker's introduction and delegate specific arguments to team members. Your planning will differ slightly from affirmative to negative. As the affirmative team, you'll need to frame the situation and the case for adopting the debate proposition. You'll want to anticipate potential objections from the negative team, but in important respects, you'll be interested in establishing an agenda for the in-class debate. As the negative team, your preparation will focus more on rebutting likely arguments by the affirmative team. Both teams will need to prepare thoroughly in order to anticipate questions and/or objections from the other team and from the audience. Be sure that everyone argues—that is, that no one offers only background or explanations—and that everyone's contribution is roughly equal.

Grading

You will receive an individual grade for the in-class debates that will constitute your final debate grade. *No group grades will be assigned*. However, your individual grade will depend on working well as a group in some respects. For instance, if your strategy is not well developed, if your team goes off-proposition, if you're not meeting the other team's arguments, or if your case has glaring weaknesses, or if you're not prepared for the question and answer session, this will almost certainly impact your individual contribution.

Your oral grade will be graded on the strength of your arguments. Having said this, there is a minimum delivery threshold that you'll need to meet to do well in these debates. If your delivery is so poor that no one can understand your arguments or if your delivery distracts completely from your arguments, then no one (including your TA) will be able to judge their strength. We'll discuss strategies for delivery in section and in lecture, but if you have concerns about your speaking skills, please come and see one of us.

The Proposition

Proposition due during section 3/30 and 3/31. Work with your debate team to develop a specific proposition. You first should choose a general topic of some significance and then a specific proposition that is both narrow in scope and fair to both teams in terms of research and argument preparation. For example, a debate proposition that requires intricate knowledge of state and federal tax codes goes beyond the scope of this assignment and will likely result in a poor in-class debate. A debate proposition that seeks to censor hip-hop lyrics will result in a pretty easy rebuttal from the opposing team.

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* UW-Madison should financially compensate its athletes for their labor.
* The State of Wisconsin should legalize prostitution.

Note that these propositions identify both actors and a specific action, and that each proposition seeks to change, in some way, the existing state of affairs.

Work with your group members to refine the debate proposition, and once finalized, make sure that both teams are arguing the specific proposition as it has been laid out. You will be asked to put your team's proposition in writing, which must be approved by your TA.

Annotated bibliography

To prepare for the final debate, you will conduct background research on the proposition topic, and will prepare an annotated bibliography of at least 8 <u>credible</u> sources, <u>4 of which must be scholarly.</u> An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents. Each citation is followed by an annotation: a brief descriptive and evaluative paragraph (roughly 75 - 100 words). The purpose of the annotation is to critically assess the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.

How Do I Do This?

First, locate and record citations to books, periodicals, and documents that may contain useful information and ideas on your topic. Briefly examine and review the actual items.

Cite the book, article, or document using the appropriate style, either MLA or another style you are familiar with. Entries must use a consistent, formal citation style. If you are not familiar with formal citation style, consult http://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/citing

Write a concise annotation that summarizes the central theme or argument of the source. Include one or more sentences that (a) evaluate the authority or background of the author and/or source, (b) describe the content of the source, and (c) say a bit about why it might be useful.

Sample Entries

Scholarly. Crothers, Lane (Austin). Rage on the Right: The American Militia Movement from Ruby Ridge to Homeland Security. Oxford: Roman & Littlefield, 2003.

This book, published in an academic series that explores social movements, offers a broad overview of militia movements in the United States. It is written by Lane (Austin) Crothers, a professor of Politics & Government at Illinois State University, who has published on a number of political topics (although this seems to be his only work on the militia movement). *Rage on the Right* investigates the history and ideology of the militia movement, and will help me to determine whether the media's classification of the protestors as "militia" is accurate, and if so, whether comparisons may be drawn with other historical examples like Ruby Ridge.

Non-scholarly. Johnson, Kirk, and Jack Healy. "Protestors in Oregon Seek to End Policy That Shaped the West." *New York Times*, January 6, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/06/us/protesters-seek-to-end-policy-that-shaped-west

This article, published in the *New York Times*, overs first-hand commentary of the standoff in Oregon by participants. The *Times* is the "paper of record" and is well known as one of the most credible newspapers in the United States. Offering a number of interviews with protestors in Oregon as well as residents of the small community in which the refuge is located, this article will help me to understand what's at stake for the people involved in this protest.

Grading

50% on correctness of citation style, 50% on quality and thoroughness of annotations.
Note: while it's probably pretty obvious, it nonetheless needs to be said: you must *read* the sources before citing them.

In this step-by step process, Rebecca Lorimer describes how she prepares students to carry out debates in class and explains how this oral activity supports student research writing.

Rebecca Lorimer
English 201

USING ORAL DEBATES TO FIND AN ARGUMENT

When student writers struggle to write argument-driven—rather than report-driven—research papers, it is often because they misunderstand the difference between a research *topic* and a research *argument*. In order to help students move from topics to arguments, I stage in-class debates with students before the research writing begins.

My goals for conducting an in-class debate are to help students

- Find a research topic that is relevant to the course
- Narrow down the topic so it is specific enough to be researched
- Find an argument about that specific topic
- Practice using persuasion

I lead students through the following steps to prepare for and carry out the debates. These usually occur over the course of two class meetings, but could easily be abbreviated for one class or extended to multiple meetings for more in-depth debate.

1. **Watch a clip of a debate**. You can find debate clips easily on YouTube. I've often used Jon Stewart's appearance on the now-defunct CNN show *Crossfire* to great success. Watching a debate elicits students' thinking about what successful persuasion looks like. After we watch the clip I ask students:

   Who did you find more persuasive? Why?
   How would you characterize the success of this debate? What was accomplished?

2. **Set parameters for a successful debate**. Through the conversation above, the students and I come to an agreement about what will constitute a successful debate in our class. This usually includes the following:

   Civilized discourse—genuine listening, acknowledging what other side has just argued
   Honest arguments—claims are reasonable and logical, use evidence for support
   Changed minds—arguments that "win" persuade a listener of something they were disinclined to believe
   No attacks or outbursts—speakers appeal to emotions, but not to the sacrifice of their ethos

3. **Explain debate format**. Formats are very flexible, but this loose structure has worked in the past: each debate side gives a two-minute speech that presents their arguments; both sides debate for six minutes. The audience asks questions for five minutes and then writes for five minutes about who has been more successful in the debate.

4. **In-class preparation work**. Depending on how much time is available during a class meeting, you can assign groups, debate roles, and topics, or else let students choose all of these. When I have time to let students choose, I do the following:

   Ask students to write down one debatable topic relevant to the course and write it on the board.
   -As a class we decide if it is indeed debatable or not. (Do people disagree on this topic?)
   Assign students to small groups and let them choose the topic from the board they'd like to debate.
   -Students decide who will be on which side of the debate.
   Have students choose roles: Who will give the speech and who will present which claims?

5. **Out-of-class preparation work**. Students research their topic in course material and outside reading. They email each other support they've found and write notes. Whoever will give the speech writes their two-minute speech.

6. **Students debate**. Groups move to the front of the class to carry out their debates according to the format above. The rest of the class acts as an audience, writing down at least one question for the debate group as they listen. The audience asks questions for five minutes and then everyone writes for five minutes, answering the following questions:

   Which side did you find most persuasive and why?
   What was their topic and argument?
   What was your view on the topic before the debate and what is your view now?

I read students' responses to these questions and tally which arguments the class found most convincing—these groups get the pleasure of a "win." But the exercise is intended most of all to accomplish the goals stated above. Student responses show me whether or not they understand the difference between topics and arguments and whether or not they can describe persuasive techniques. Some students end up writing their papers with their debate argument or other arguments they saw presented by other groups. Other students research an entirely new topic but follow the process practiced in the debate.

Handouts like this one used in Psychology 225 teach students how to prepare for an in-class oral presentation The excerpt below shows just some of what such handouts can include.

Gordon H. Bower
Psychology 225

DOS AND DON'TS FOR BRIEF RESEARCH TALKS

1. A talk is not a written *Journal of Experimental Psychology* paper. Talks have an informal narrative style and are dramatic rather than detailed or completely informative. Don't read your "speech." Speak it from memory.

2. The model for the short speech is the campfire story—teller of a mystery (or a Steve Martin skit), not the reciter of an encyclopedia.

3. You must be very *selective* of what you can say in a short time. Most short speeches can barely carry one main idea plus its support. Resist the temptation to tell everything you know or every thought you had about it: only the most interesting and important things can be said.

4. Talk informally as though you were telling your grandmother what you did and why. Complexity of expression is uncorrelated with wisdom, intelligence, and originality; it's perfectly correlated with audience puzzlement and boredom.

5. A narrative style is preferable in talks. Research is done to tell a story—going from problem, goal, plan through actions (observations) to outcomes, resolution, and a moral (conclusion). Avoid a written journal-style organization.

6. Prepare your first two sentences like they were a Madison-Avenue advertisement for you and your talk. Grab the audience in these first sentences.

7. Use visual aids (overhead transparencies or slides but not both) if they help. In visuals, make it simple, clear and obvious. Don't clutter slides with irrelevancies. Slides must be readable; print large. One word can abbreviate whole phrases. If you have lots of results you must show, use many slides, not one cluttered slide.

8. Put up a slide only a moment before you want to refer to it. Give the audience time to read it or you read it to them. Remove the slide when you want the audience to attend fully to you again.

9. If a within-trial procedure is complicated, show a concrete illustration of it in a visual. If the series of events in an experiment is long or complicated, show a diagram of it.

10. In narrative talks, descriptive and inferential statistics should be suppressed. Speak "eyeball-effects" rather than F-values. Say "These words were remembered very much better than those," NOT "The mean recall for the two categories was 8.76 and 4.37, and difference gave an F of 13.8 which with 1 and 14 degrees of freedom was statistically significant at the .01 level." A better attitude towards description is "Holy baloney, look at that!"

11. State the problem being investigated in *concrete*, *specific* terms. Help the audience understand specifics first before moving to generalities (if you ever do).

12. You don't have to have instant answers for everything. If you don't understand a questioner, ask him to rephrase it so you can understand. If he asks three questions, answer any one of them and move on.

13. Smile; be and appear friendly and glad to be there. Dress sharp. Speak loud enough. Articulate clearly. Be Superman or Superwoman.

In this assignment for Social Work 821: Aging and Mental Health, graduate students synthesize literature, present that information, and design interactive activities to engage and teach their fellow students.

Professor Betty Kramer
Social Work 821

INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

The purpose of this assignment is to: 1) provide an opportunity to identify & synthesize multiple sources of information relevant to practice issues and/or models of assessment and intervention; and 2) provide an opportunity for cultivating the capacity to train other professionals to increase practice competencies. Students may work alone or in small groups (i.e., no more than three) to develop the workshop.

The task:

a) Select a topic from the syllabus that interests you
b) Thoroughly investigate the research & practice literature relevant to your topic. NOTE: As graduate students, you are expected to draw upon current empirical articles from journals (i.e., research studies), and not rely solely on book chapters or web sites. In addition, you may want to talk with practitioners in the community who are knowledgeable about your topic area to learn from their expertise.
c) Identify at least one of the course competencies or practice behaviors stated on the course syllabus (see pp. 1-2) that you will address in this workshop.
d) Prepare a **45 minute interactive workshop** that includes a wide variety of teaching strategies. NOTE: Your workshop should include **no more than 25 minutes of lecture.** The lecture must provide an outline of the workshop, relevant competency and/or practice behavior(s), and citations (author and year) for references cited.
e) **Develop exercises that will allow students to actively engage in learning** (e.g., to practice a skill; discuss a related case example, respond to questions). You are encouraged to **be creative** (e.g., write a play, sing a song, dramatize an event), to utilize teaching strategies that will enhance learning and make your topic interesting (e.g., handouts, use of overhead, films), and to **think critically** about the material you are examining (e.g. gaps in knowledge; dimensions of diversity, research limitations).
f) On the day of your workshop, you must provide a typed APA style reference list for all in attendance, with full citations for any and all resources utilized in your review of the literature and presentation.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENT

	Grades for Assignment	Possible Score	Your Score
I.	Course competency/practice behavior identified and addressed successfully in workshop, references cited on slides	20	_____
II.	Teaching strategies: variety of strategies used, good use of eye contact, more than lecture, involves audience, creative approaches	15	_____
III.	Evidence of critical thinking (e.g., research limitations, dimensions of diversity; gaps in our knowledge)	5	_____
IV.	Time management – Lecture portion less than 25 minutes Workshop concluded within 45 minutes.	5	_____
V.	APA style reference list. Current/comprehensive? Reference drawn from journal articles? Research and practice sources included?	5	_____
	TOTAL	50	_____

This Biocore handout offers students tips for how best to use PowerPoint to present their group field research. Note that students are being asked to present an oral "narrative" of their research process and experimental findings—not an easy task!

Dr. Michelle Harris
Dr. Janet Batzli
Biocore

PREPARING POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

Preparing PowerPoint Slides

Keep it simple.

- Think of your PowerPoint slides as "billboards" conveying the major points of your presentation. Present only one to two major ideas per slide. You can provide clarification or transitions in your verbal presentation.
- The least effective visuals are crowded, complex lists of numbers or words. They strain the eyes and attention of your audience. By the time you get to your point, the audience may no longer care what it is. Bulleted key ideas, simple graphs, charts or tables are much more effective because they quickly communicate your major ideas. You can include important details in your oral narrative.
- If your methods are complicated, show a concrete illustration of it in a visual diagram, flow chart, concept map, or table rather than a lengthy list of procedures.

Design every slide for the back-row viewer.

- Fill the slide with the statement/diagram/chart/graph. Use sharp bold lines and print clearly with characters large enough to be read by the people in the back row.
- Choose colors of high contrast (black on white is much easier to read than red on black).
- Use large font sizes to label all parts of graphs, charts and tables (e.g., column headings, units of measure, axes of graphs, etc.) so that the audience clearly understands what they are looking at.
- Design using a consistent background and color scheme throughout presentation (a background of your own creation or pre-made template). This gives your presentation continuity, providing a visual thread or theme for your viewers. Avoid busy-looking backgrounds which distract your audience.

Use color, slide transitions, and animation for emphasis of your science, not ornament.

- Thoughtfully planned use of color can emphasize relationships and organization throughout your presentation.
- Use only simple slide transitions which do not distract the audience from the contents of your slide.
- Use animation only if it helps to emphasize an important point you want to make. Flashing words or endless animation loops are distracting and draw audience away from your point.
- In summary, use color, transitions, and animation that engage your audience rather than distract them.

A well-executed visual aid is simple, informative, and pleasant to view. Have a friend look over your slides before your presentation. If she/he can grasp the key points without extensive explanation from you, you have probably prepared effective visual aids.

Figure legends. There is usually no need for figure legends in a PowerPoint presentation. The words are usually too small to read. Instead, use a large, descriptive title for your figures and a well-displayed key for your different treatments.

Inserted pictures. If you grab a picture from an online article, scanned text figure, etc., you must cite the website and/or publisher appropriately below the picture.

Last presented slide. End your talk with a simple slide that summarizes your conclusions. Prepare a slide that lists your references, but don't show it to your audience as part of your formal presentation. This reference list is important for your instructors in evaluating your presentation, but usually is not interesting to your audience. You may, however, be asked about your information sources immediately after your presentation, and so you could refer to your reference slide on such an "as-needed" basis.

Delivering Your Presentations

We list specific tips below, but perhaps our most important advice is to PRACTICE, PRACTICE, and PRACTICE before you present your research.

Introduction. Always introduce yourself and your collaborators, or let teammates introduce themselves.

Make the most of your figures. Verbally present figure axes—both the label and units. Explaining axes allows the presenter to slow down and define the variables of interest and also clarifies the data manipulations for the audience. Do not rush through slides showing your data; allow your audience time to process all of the information shown. Direct their attention to trends/differences that you used to make a decision about your hypothesis or research question.

Speak loudly. Project toward your audience instead of facing your slides! Many of us do not have booming orator voices. Therefore, we need to sound obnoxiously loud to ourselves at the front of the room in order to be heard in the back. The quickest way to lose your audience is by speaking too softly, looking only at the laptop computer on which your PPT slideshow is loaded, or by addressing your shoes.

Speak in a narrative style. If you need notes use them only as cues. Do not read your "speech." Speak it from memory. You are the expert—you know your work better than anyone else!

Be selective about what you say in a short talk. Resist the temptation to explain every detail, or every thought you have about your experiment. Focus on your most important points to fill in important details that allow for clarification and transitions between slides.

Guide your audience attention. Put up a PowerPoint slide or point out a particular section of your poster only a moment before you want to refer to it. Give the audience time to read it or you read it to them. Remove the slide, use a black slide, or stand in front of your poster if you want the audience to focus all their attention on your words.

Your team should be prepared to answer the following questions.

- What was the research question? Is the hypothesis testable given the research design?
- Why was this question interesting to the group? Is the biological rationale an appropriate basis for the hypothesis?
- Was the experimental design appropriate to the research question?
- Are the figures and tables appropriate for the type of data? Are they easy to interpret, properly labeled with informative legends (for posters)?
- Do your results support your hypothesis as stated? Did your methods allow you to test your hypothesis? Are the conclusions logical given the data? How do the results impact what is known about this phenomenon? Are the arguments easily followed? If your data do not support your hypothesis, what biological assumptions were likely inaccurate?
- What new directions would the group like to take with this research?

Students in Professor Lindsay Palmer's course work with a partner to design a proposal for an international news network and present that proposal to their classmates. In designing their proposal, Professor Palmer expects students to integrate three or more course readings that inform their thinking about the network's branding, funding, and programming. She also provides a detailed presentation rubric that outlines different levels of performance.

Professor Lindsay Palmer
Journalism 620, International Communication

A FINAL PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT AND RUBRIC IN JOURNALISM 620

The Assignment (worth 20% of your grade):

For your last assignment in this class, **you and a partner** will design a proposal for your own global news network, and then give a presentation on your network to the class. You will essentially be "pitching" this network to your classmates, and they will be acting as though they are potential funding partners. You will provide the class with **a visual component** that demonstrates **1) how you will brand your network**, **2)** an explanation of **how you will fund** your network, **3)** an explanation of **whether or not your network will be truly "global," 4)** an example of the **types of programming** you will provide, and **5)** a detailed account **of your network's ultimate mission. PLEASE NOTE that you must incorporate at least THREE of the course readings into your presentation, including direct quotes and page numbers.**

The Guidelines:

- You must present this to the class in the form of a Power Point or Google Slides presentation
- Your presentation **must be no shorter and no longer than 15 minutes, NOT counting the Q&A, which will last between 5-10 minutes, depending on the time we have.**
- You will present on the day for which you signed up, and you cannot reschedule this under any circumstances.
- You must integrate **at least THREE** of our course readings into your presentation
- You must go into sufficient detail on each of the 5 required elements:
    - **BRANDING:** Think about the other networks we've analyzed in class. How have they branded themselves? What colors, images, and font types do they use to paint a picture of themselves for the world? What types of promotional materials have they generated? Do this type of branding for your own network.
    - **FUNDING:** Will your network be fully state-funded? If so, will it rely on government subsidies, licensing fees, or some other model? Will your network be commercially-funded? Donor-funded? A hybrid? Remember that your funding structure should match your mission statement.
    - **REACH:** Where would you like your network to be broadcast? Which countries, and why? Can you think of any obstacles you might face if you try to air your content in certain countries (answering this question will require a bit of outside research). How would you respond to those obstacles? MOST IMPORTANTLY, make a case **(using our class readings to support your claim)** of whether or not your network will be truly "global."
    - **PROGRAMMING:** What type of news content do you wish to air on your network? Hard news that replays every couple of hours? Talk programs? In-depth investigative reporting? Also, what types of stories do you think will be most important to cover?
    - **MISSION:** This is perhaps the most important part of your presentation. Write a short (1-paragraph) mission statement that explains the goal of your network. It would be a good idea to look at the mission statements of other global news networks, to help you think this through. MAKE SURE that the rest of your proposal reflects the mission you have presented to the class. In other words, if you want to avoid infotainment and corporate-style news reporting, perhaps you don't want your network to be funded solely by advertising.
- You must incorporate at least **three** of our course readings into your presentation, explaining how these readings helped you conceptualize a particular element of your news network. **Include direct quotes and page numbers.**

FINAL PRESENTATION GRADING RUBRIC

An "A" presentation should…

- Satisfactorily address **EACH** of the five elements outlined in the assignment:
    - **Branding**
    - **Funding**
    - **"Global" Reach**
    - **Programming**
    - **Mission**
- Incorporate at least **three** of our course readings, explaining why they are relevant and including direct quotes and page numbers.
- Not go significantly **over or under** 15 minutes
- Explain how branding, funding, programming, and reach **all correspond with the network's mission**

An "AB" presentation will display <u>one (and only one!)</u> of the following weaknesses:

- Satisfactorily address all **but one** of the five elements outlined in the assignment
- Incorporate 1-2 of the course readings, but <u>not the required three</u>, OR, fail to explain why the cited readings are relevant.
- Not adequately draw the connection between the network's mission and the network's branding, funding, programming, and reach
- Go significantly under 15 minutes

A "B" presentation will display two (but no more) of the following weaknesses:

- Satisfactorily address all **but one** of the five elements outlined in the assignment
- Fail to incorporate any course readings, OR, fail to explain why the cited readings are relevant.
- Not adequately draw the connection between the network's mission and the network's branding, funding, programming, and reach
- Go significantly under 15 minutes

A "BC" presentation will display three (but no more) of the following weaknesses:

- Satisfactorily address all **but one** of the five elements outlined in the assignment
- Fail to incorporate any course readings, OR, fail to explain why the cited readings are relevant.
- Not adequately draw the connection between the network's mission and the network's branding, funding, programming, and reach
- Go significantly under 15 minutes

A "C" presentation will display EACH of the following weaknesses:

- Satisfactorily address all **but one** of the five elements outlined in the assignment
- Fail to incorporate any course readings, OR, fail to explain why the cited readings are relevant.
- Not adequately draw the connection between the network's mission and the network's branding, funding, programming, and reach
- Go significantly under 15 minutes

A "D" presentation will be underdeveloped, incoherent, and display each of the above weaknesses. Students will only receive an F if they fail to do the assignment, or if they are found to have plagiarized any part of the assignment.

Professor Virginia Sapiro describes in detail how she places class participation criteria as central in her classroom. She gives students concrete ideas about what is expected of them and suggests explicit ways they can improve their participation.

Professor Virginia Sapiro
Women's Studies 640

MAKING CRITERIA FOR CLASS PARTICIPATION EXPLICIT

Women's Studies 640 is the capstone course required of all Women's Studies majors during their senior year. Different instructors use different themes. I use "women and leadership" because I believe this allows me to structure the course as a bridge out to the next phase of these students' lives. This goal also motivates my strong emphasis on developing comfort with public speaking skills.

Despite many changes in recent decades, a disproportionate number of women continue to be silent in class even when they demonstrate in more "private" conversations after class that they have plenty to say. Years of informal study reveals this common problem: many of the women (and some men) who are silent in class regularly identify something they would like to say, but for many reasons they mentally rehearse their intervention to the point that by the time they are ready to speak, the discussion has moved on to new things. Instead of speaking in class, they may then approach the professor after class to share the idea or remain silent.

The oral communication requirement in Women's Studies 640 is best understood not as a single assignment, or even a series of assignments, but as a semester-long project. This is how it works:

On the first day of class I point out the requirement discussed in the syllabus that all members of the class participate in all class sessions, and that this in-class work constitutes 20% of the grade. http://www.polisci.wisc.edu/users/sapiro/ws640/ws640req.htm.

I then lead a class discussion on speaking in class that I initiate by asking four questions:

1. How many of them tend not to speak much in class, and find the requirement a little worrying? Many of them—at least half—raise their hands.
2. How many of them recognize themselves in this description: At some point in class they want to make a contribution, and begin to rehearse what they will say in their mind. They figure out how they will introduce the comment or question, perhaps rewording it once or twice. They then figure out what they will say next. But now they have forgotten how they will open their comment, so they have to go back to that, etc. Many of the students laugh in recognition, and many of the students who said they don't speak much indicate they recognize themselves.
3. How many of the people who rehearse speaking in class normally rehearse what they will say in the same way when speaking individually to the professor or other students? Almost no one says yes.
4. Why do they rehearse their ideas to the point of silencing themselves in public? This generates a long discussion that involves the usually silent students, who come up with an interesting but pretty standard set of responses about why they are afraid to speak unrehearsed in class. They figure out that the reasons for their silence are barriers they should overcome. (There is much more to say about how and why this works as it does, much of it related to issues of power, but this is not the place.)

I complete this discussion by asking:

1. How many have taken classes in which class participation was part of the grade? Most raise their hands.
2. How many have ever received specific criteria or a rubric by which to understand how the quality of your participation can be evaluated? None—or almost none—raise their hands.

I distribute the rubric I use, developed by Professor John Tyler of Brown University and presented in the Pedagogy section (www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/pedagogy/) of Brown's *Decameron Web* at www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/pedagogy/particip-assessm.shtml.

Guidelines for Evaluating Participation

Outstanding Contributor: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are always substantive, provide one or more major insights as well as direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and persuasively presented. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished markedly.

Good Contributor: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, provide good insights and sometimes direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and often persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished.

Adequate Contributor: Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Challenges are sometimes presented, fairly well substantiated, and are sometimes persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished somewhat.

Non-Participant: This person says little or nothing in class. Hence, there is not an adequate basis for evaluation. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would not be changed.

Unsatisfactory Contributor: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide few if any insights and never a constructive direction for the class. Integrative comments and effective challenges are absent. If this person were not a member of the class, valuable air-time would be saved.

Note: Prof. Tyler obtained these guidelines from Prof. Richard J. Murnane at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Prof. Murnane, in turn, learned of them from someone else. Although the original attribution for the guidelines has been lost, they continue to be so useful to so many.

[Quoted from: http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/pedagogy/particip-assessm.shtml]

This website is linked to the assignments page of my syllabus, and I give them each a copy. The rubric emphasizes participation in class as a *contribution* to the learning that can take place within the group as a whole. In other words, it fits in well with the leadership theme. I invite any student with concerns about this assignment to come see me and discuss strategies for developing the confidence to do this.

Many of the class sessions included visits by different women leaders who spent about a half hour discussing how they got to do what they do, and some of their thoughts on gender and leadership. Class participation, then, involved asking these visitors questions during the hour of so of discussion with the visitor, followed by 45 minutes to an hour after the visitor left to carry on the discussion just among ourselves.

I pass out 3x5 cards in every class. **Students must hand these in at the end of class with an evaluation of their class participation.** Many choose to write extensively. During some classes I ask for student volunteers to take particular leadership roles in running class discussion (including two days when I had to be out of town). These roles get no “extra credit” as such, but are considered part of the overall contribution to the class meetings.

At the end of the course, I handed back the cards to each student and asked them to grade themselves on the class participation component of the course, noting that leadership requires the ability to engage in clear-headed self-assessment. I gave specific guidelines for criteria for grading, which were based on the rubric they used all semester.

Informal assessment notes: Many students showed considerable development in public speaking. Many were very self-reflective about their oral communication and what it meant. Many showed signs of becoming more comfortable with engaging in principled self-assessment. An unusual number of students took the option of doing a final project that involved interviewing people whom they considered leaders.

The full syllabus and listing of requirements are available at www.polisci.wisc.edu/users/sapiro/ws640/ws640.htm.

For a semester-long group project in a graduate course, Deb Shapiro requires students to evaluate their team members using Google Forms.

Deb Shapiro
The Information School

GROUP PARTICIPATION SELF-EVALUATIONS IN LIBRARY & INFORMATION STUDIES (LIS) 646

Group Participation: Participation in the group project is part of your grade. It is not possible for me as the teacher to fully see into the dynamics of every group, so I will leave the policing up to each group. Your group can choose to report a member who is freeloading to me, or simply suck it up and allow them to share in your good grade. From past experience, I can tell you that in most cases, students who are slacking on group work are also slacking on their individual work. Although they may get the benefit of a better grade on the group project, their final grade in the course will reflect their true effort in the course. You will also get the opportunity to give me a little feedback on how well each group member performed by completing the peer review survey form that will be posted in the online course at the end of the semester. The peer review will be kept confidential between each student and the instructor, so you can be frank in your assessments of your classmates.

Since the group project is team work, students are asked to peer review their team members' and their own level of effort on the group project. To peer review your team mates, and yourself, please fill out this form. [Available December 11th, 6:00 AM] The feedback you send using this form is confidential between you and the instructor, so you can be frank in your comments. Students who fill out the form earn 5 bonus points.

Use this form to rate your groups project group members and yourself. There is room for the names of five students on the form - if your group only has four members, put N/A in the extra space for names so the form will submit.

Personal Info *

Please fill in your full name and group name/number

Short answer text

Ranking Scale

Excellent: Consistently carried more than his/her fair share of the workload. [5 points]
Very good: Consistently did what he/she was supposed to do, very well prepared and cooperative. [4 points]
Satisfactory: Usually did what he/she was supposed to do, acceptably prepared and cooperative. [3 points]
Marginal: Took a long time to reply online; may have missed one contribution or shoddy work, rarely prepared. [2 points]
Unsatisfactory: Often failed to respond or complete their section of assignments, unprepared. [1 point]
No show: No participation at all – we carried this person. [0 points]

Name *

Use the boxes to fill in each of your group mate's names, and your own, then give numerical rankings and letter grades using the scale directly below each name

Short answer text

Question

- Excellent: 5 / A
- Very Good: 4 / AB
- Satisfactory: 3 / B
- Marginal: 2 / BC
- Unsatisfactory: 1 / C
- Totally blew it: 0 / F

Professor Herrera posts participation grades to Canvas after class the same day, and she finds that this frequent and timely feedback and clear criteria lead to significant improvements in students' participation in class.

Professor Yoshiko Herrera
Political Science 186

EVALUATING STUDENTS' ORAL PARTICIPATION IN CLASS

Professor Herrera includes the following guidelines on her syllabus. She offers a clear explanation for how she evaluates students' participation in class—and posts grades on Canvas every day after class. This practice has substantially increased and improved students' preparation and participation.

Preparation and participation in discussions is worth 10% of students' grades, and the "In-class explanation of concepts" oral exercise is worth 15% (5% for each of 3 explanations).

Reading, Preparation, and Participation:

- This is a discussion-based class and active participation is essential. Mere attendance is not full participation. Active participation means being prepared by doing the reading and thinking about the material so that you can ask and answer questions related to the course material in class.
- Absences will only be excused due to religious conflicts or medical issues; contact me as soon as possible, should a medical issue or religious conflict arise.
- Students are expected to attend for the full class period; arriving late or leaving the room during class will result in a lowered participation grade for the day
- It is acceptable to use a laptop in class to take notes, but engaging in other work or online activity unrelated to the course during class will result in a lowered participation grade for the day.
- The grading scheme for discussion participation is:
  A = Attended and actively participated (e.g. raised hand, and *seemed in command of readings and material*)
  B = Attended and spoke, but without evidence of preparation
  C = Attended but did not speak
  F = Did not attend
  Note that there is no "D" reflecting the large gap between attending and not attending. Also, there are no A/B or B/C grades, but those liminal grades will appear in the final course grades.

In-class explanation of concepts:

Students are responsible for reading all assigned material before class. There are no traditional lectures in this course; instead each week I will randomly choose five students and ask each of them to explain a concept from the week's readings. Student explanations will be graded according to the following criteria:
A = Outstanding explanation of concept, going beyond just description of text and offering original analysis.
B = Good explanation of concept, demonstrating adequate engagement with the text.
C = Minimally able to explain or describe concept, but only in the broadest terms.
D = Unable to explain concept with any accuracy, suggesting a lack of reading.
F = Did not attend

This resource models one way to explain expectations for student participation in class discussions. By providing these guidelines, Professor Karen Evans-Romaine outlines the purpose and value of class discussions for students and their learning in the course.

Professor Karen Evans-Romaine
Lit Tran 205/Gender and Women's Studies 205/Slavic 405

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION PARTICIPATION

Ten percent of your grade will be based on your participation in class discussions. That will include your readiness to answer study questions I hand out in advance as well as additional questions I may ask in class about the readings, your ability to offer your own insights (both comments and questions) in class discussion, and your willingness to participate as part of a discussion group in class. It does not mean dominating discussions or interrupting others.

It does include attentiveness in listening to other class members and sensitivity and tact in responding to others' comments and in expressing your own opinions. Class participation should help all of you develop more sophisticated interpretations of literary texts through the collective endeavor of discussion. Discussions should also help each of you formulate ideas for your papers; they provide a forum for you to think out loud and receive feedback from your instructor and your colleagues.

Dr. Michelle Harris explains how she uses the Biocore presentation rubric to evaluate oral presentations.

Dr. Michelle Harris
Biocore

The Challenge of Evaluating Oral Presentations

Grading student writing fairly and consistently is challenging. Grading student oral presentations fairly and consistently is downright scary. What if we don't remember everything students said? How do we simultaneously listen carefully and jot down grading notes *and* think of good questions to ask them? Until recently, these and other similar nagging concerns kept me awake at night. As a lab instructor in the Biology Core Curriculum (Biocore) Program, I wanted to be able to evaluate students' oral performance as fairly as I did their writing.

We used this rubric for the first time in Biocore 324 lab in fall 2006 and were very pleased with it for several reasons. First, creating the rubric forced us to reflect carefully on and clearly articulate our expectations for student oral PowerPoint presentations. We decided on five basic components of a good oral PowerPoint presentation: content, organization, teamwork (our lab students work in groups of three to four), visuals, and presentation mechanics. Second, we had to define criteria within each of these categories specific to key issues of scientific thinking.

For example, in the content area, we focused on criteria such as developing a clear biological rationale and a complete, concise hypothesis statement. Third, we had to define the relative importance of these five components; we agreed that the first two components (content and organization) were more important than visuals and mechanics, because they were the strongest evidence of students' understanding of scientific concepts and their efforts toward communicating them. The scores that teams earned on these first three components were thus weighted more heavily in terms of the overall presentation grade. Finally, we made the rubric available to students as they developed their slide shows, so there were far fewer student questions regarding our expectations. Research teams told us that they frequently referred to the rubric as they prepared their slides and practiced their oral presentations.

During the students' 15-minute presentations, each of us (the TA, two undergrad TAs, and I) had the rubric in front of us while we listened. We made quick notes about the rating we gave for each component and often wrote cryptic comments to ourselves regarding questions/clarifications to ask each team during the five-minute question-answer session following each presentation. Immediately after all teams had presented, my TAs and I had a private round-table discussion of our individual component ratings and came to a consensus regarding the final grade for each presentation. When necessary, we would refer to the PowerPoint slides that students had posted online in our class My WebSpace folder.

I found that the component ratings assigned by my TAs often closely matched my own. When we had a difficult time deciding on a final grade, we would refer to the rubric to remind ourselves of the objective guidelines already in place. I felt much more confident that each final grade was appropriate, and TAs were better able to target precisely their written comments to help students improve.

Biocore Oral Presentation Rubric Conversion to Letter Grade

Grade	Minimum Criteria
A	Team earned a "4" in Content and Organization, earned a "3" or better in Teamwork, Visuals, and Presentation Mechanics.
AB	Team did not meet minimum criteria for an "A", but earned a "3" or better in Content and Organization. Earned a "2" or better in Teamwork, Visuals, and Presentation Mechanics.
B	Team did not meet minimum criteria for an "AB", but earned a "2" or better in Content and Organization. Earned a "1" or better in Teamwork, Visuals, and Presentation Mechanics.
BC	Team did not meet minimum criteria for a "B", but earned a "1" or better in all five areas (Content, Organization, Teamwork, Visuals, and Presentation Mechanics).
C	Team did not meet minimum criteria for a "BC", but earned a "1" or better in Content and Organization. Received no more than one zero in Teamwork, Visuals, and Presentation Mechanics.
D	Team did not meet minimum criteria for a "C", but earned a "1" or better in either Content or Organization.
F	Team did not meet minimum criteria for a "D."

BIOCORE ORAL PRESENTATION RUBRIC

	0 = inadequate (C, D or F)	1 = adequate (BC)	2 = good (B)	3 = very good (AB)	4 = excellent (A)
Content	Team's presentation was missing many key components; those stated were unclear and/or were not stated concisely.	Team clearly, concisely, & thoroughly conveyed only some of the key components, and those presented could have been done much more clearly, concisely, and/or thoroughly.	Team clearly, concisely, & thoroughly conveyed most of the key components, OR they included all of the key components but many could have been presented more clearly, concisely and/or thoroughly.	Team clearly, concisely, & thoroughly conveyed all but 1 key component or had a problem similar to the following: clearly & thoroughly conveyed all key components but could have been a little more concise.	The team clearly, concisely, & thoroughly conveyed their research project such that the audience could grasp & evaluate the work. The presentation contained all of these key components: 1. a clear, logical biological rationale summarizing research goals, key concepts, unfamiliar terminology, & knowledge gaps to be addressed, referencing appropriate literature; 2. concise, complete hypothesis statement; 3. clear explanation of methods, particularly those unfamiliar to audience; 4. comprehensible graph(s) of results (or expected results); 5. clear & logical conclusions based on data (or expected data) & implications; 6. summary of assumptions that were supported or incorrect and any relevant problems/errors. 7. Audience questions after the presentation were answered logically and fully.
Organization	The presentation content was not logically organized and so did not facilitate the audience's comprehension.	Only some of the presentation content was logically organized, and so many key clarifications were necessary after the presentation.	Most of the presentation content was logically organized, but some key clarifications were necessary after the presentation.	The presentation content was logically organized so that only a few minor clarifications were necessary after the presentation.	The presentation content was logically organized in a way that facilitated the audience's comprehension.
Teamwork	No teamwork was evident.	Teamwork was not effective because none of the three criteria was fully met.	Teamwork was somewhat effective; 1 of the 3 criteria was fully met.	Teamwork was largely effective; 2 of the 3 criteria were fully met.	Effective teamwork contributed to the success of the presentation because it met these criteria: 1. each team member's contribution to the presentation was equivalent; 2. each team member contributed answers to questions asked after the presentation, to the best of their ability; 3. teammates were respectful of each speaker and did not interrupt them.
Visuals	The visuals used satisfied very few of the key criteria.	The visuals used satisfied only some of the key criteria.	The visuals used satisfied most of the key criteria.	The visuals used satisfied all but one of the key criteria.	The visuals accompanying the oral narrative very effectively conveyed the research project because they satisfied these criteria: 1. PowerPoint slide content was relevant; 2. overall slide appearance was pleasing to the eye but did not distract from the research; 3. font size, graphs, & figures were large enough to be seen from the back of the room; 4. font, graph, & figure colors contrasted well against background & so were easy to see; 5. slides were filled with just enough information to be informative without looking overcrowded; 6. graphs and figures were clearly labeled, had titles (no legends), and effectively displayed relevant data/trends.

Presentation Mechanics	The presentation mechanics satisfied very few of the key criteria.	The presentation mechanics satisfied only some of the key criteria.	The presentation mechanics satisfied most of the key criteria.	The presentation mechanics satisfied all but one to two of the key criteria.	The presentation mechanics allowed the research project to be very effectively conveyed because they satisfied these criteria: 1. the rate, flow, and clarity of delivery by each speaker was appropriate; 2. all speakers were introduced; 3. each speaker's voice was loud enough to be heard in the back of the room; 4. each speaker spoke to the audience in a narrative style, avoiding distracting mannerisms; 5. transitions between speakers were smooth and helped audience follow the presentation; 6. graph & figure axes labeling were explained clearly before trends/results were emphasized; 7. each slide was displayed long enough to allow audience to read it; 8. presentation ended with final conclusion statement(s); 9. entire presentation took 15 +/- 1 minutes.

ASSESSING AND EVALUATING YOUR COURSE

In this innovative and dual-purpose assignment, Professor Eric Schatzberg asks his students to write a memo that both incorporates course principles and helps him evaluate the course itself.

Professor Eric Schatzberg
History of Science 222

GATHERING STUDENT FEEDBACK THROUGH A FORMAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Third Essay Instructions:

General. Using your lecture notes and the readings, write a three- to four-page essay, double-spaced, which means three lines/inch, with one-inch margins all around. Do not exceed four pages. Use a readable, reasonably large 12-point font. Completed essays are due Monday, May 15, in my office, 7129 Social Science. If I am not in, slide the essay under my door.

Audience. This essay is in form of a memo to the professor of the course from a teaching assistant. Assume that the teaching assistant (you) is very smart, and that the professor (me) is a bit thick, so you need to be very clear in your explanations. Remember that it's not enough just to refer to readings or general ideas—you need to include specific details relevant to your argument.

Structure. In your first paragraph, clearly state the main point you are making, along with a brief summary of the evidence and argument you will use to support it. In an essay of this sort, you should generally focus on two or three specific examples drawn from different weeks of the course. Be sure to explain how each example supports your general point.

Writing. The quality of your writing will count toward your grade. Please reread the handouts I distributed in class for the first essay. When quoting from course readings, cite author and page numbers in parentheses after the quotation. Avoid long quotations; I'm looking for your own interpretation.

Collaboration. You may discuss the exam with classmates before you start writing, but please do not discuss the exam with classmates after you start writing. Feel free to ask a friend or roommate not in the course to read a draft of your essay and tell you what does or does not make sense. The Writing Center in H.C. White will also look over a draft; to make an appointment call 263-1992. For more information, see its web site at http://writing.wisc.edu.

Question:

Imagine that you are a teaching assistant in this class. The professor has asked for your help in improving the last part of the course. In particular, the professor feels that the two main topics in the last four weeks, space flight and computers, were not well connected to the main themes developed earlier in the semester, themes such as the inventive process, the science-technology relationship, the economics of technological systems, or the impact of technological change on work.

Write a memo to the professor explaining how to make these connections using lectures and discussions. Choose one of the two main topics in the third part of the course, and show how this topic can be presented using at least two major themes or concepts from the first two-thirds of the course. You need to make specific connections using material from the readings and lectures so that your professor will know precisely what to do. Be honest, but constructive; you might need a recommendation letter some day.

Questions like these can be useful for soliciting student feedback during the semester, when there is still time to make adjustments in the course schedule and in lesson plans.

Kelly Besecke
Tona Williams
Sociology 210

SAMPLE MID-SEMESTER EVALUATIONS TO SOLICIT STUDENT FEEDBACK

Example #1

At this point in the semester, you have experienced many of the activities that make up this course, both in the class and outside of the classroom. Now, we would like to get some concrete feedback from you about what you think. Please comment on any aspects of the course, including both the *process*, or how we do things, and the *content*, or what we do. Please give specific feedback, wherever possible, so that it will be constructive. Tell us what is working well for you, and suggest practical ways that issues could be addressed within the class.

To refresh your memory, here are the basic activities we have done so far:

Assignments: Editing exercise, Library assignment, Deviance project, Focus group presentation and paper, Reaction paragraphs, Book summary and critique, Quizzes, and Readings.

In-class activities: Instruction in writing, Instruction in library research, Discussion of readings organized around quiz questions, Discussion of readings organized around your comments and reaction paragraphs, Focus group sessions.

Out-of-class interactions: Conferences, Email communication

1. What do you like about the course? Which assignments or activities have you found most helpful or interesting and why? What would you like to see more of, and how could this be implemented?

2. What would you like to change about the course? Which assignments or activities have you found least helpful or interesting, and why? What would you like to see less of, and how could this be implemented?

3. Other comments?

Example #2

Just like you workshop each other's papers, I'd like you to take some time now that we're half way through the semester to workshop this class for me. Tell me what you think my main purpose is, so I can find out if I've conveyed it clearly enough. Tell me what's working well, and tell me what's not working well. Give me specific feedback on what I can do to improve the course. I promise to read your comments carefully and to consider seriously making major revisions to the second half of the course; I will, however, be more likely to make major revisions if you can demonstrate to me how and why the class would be better because of those revisions.

What do you think are my main goals for you in the course?

To what extent do you feel that what we're doing in class (and out of class in take-home assignments) is helping you meet those goals?

What parts of the course do you like best, and why?

What parts of the course do you like least, and why?

These strategies offer simple ways to get feedback from students in large and small courses, online and in-class, regarding their experiences with writing projects.

Professor Jeremy Morris
Communication Arts

Easy Ways to Assess Student Learning in an In-Progress Course

Google Forms Feedback

Professor Morris periodically uses surveys that he easily creates and distributes with Google Forms to ask students for feedback on various aspects of his courses.

He explains that, in large undergraduate classes of over 100 students, some of the writing-related questions he asks include the following:

“In discussion section, I wish we focused more time/less time/the same amount of time talking about the role readings" (the role readings are the weekly writing assignments they do analyzing the texts we read). I usually leave an open box too, which is where I get the more useful feedback. That box says “Please add any additional comments about the role readings you’d like to add: where they succeed, where they don’t, what you enjoy, what you find challenging”.

I don’t do this for all the writing assignments: just the ones I’m curious/worried/excited about. But you could easily take a question like that and apply it to a wide variety of assignments in the class. You could also ask it in a more specific and pointed manner, like I do with the question about the feedback I give on writing: “I wish the professor gave more/less/the same amount of detailed comments on my assignments.” Again, I add the open box for more feedback.

In practice, this method has worked better at the graduate level than the undergraduate, since the feedback the grad students gave actually alerted me to the fact they wanted me to push them harder and in different directions than my initial assignment plans. Still, I use this feedback method regularly as a temperature check with the undergraduates and it does help me recognize and address any issues earlier than when I just rely on standard course evaluation forms.

Elisabeth Miller
English 201

In-Class Feedback Session

In my small, 19-person English composition courses, on the day that a major project is due and we are closing one unit and beginning another, I often take 20 minutes of class time to gather student feedback on the course to this point. While I don’t make every change that students ask for, this brief reflection gives me a sense of different needs students have so that I can make productive changes for the next unit (and/or the next time I teach the course). Our discussion also gives students a sense of ownership and engagement in this small, often group-oriented class.

Students spend 5 to 10 minutes writing answers to questions like these:

1. What was the most challenging part of the unit 1 paper?
2. What class activities (discussions, readings, writing activities, workshopping as a class, peer reviewing in small groups, etc.) helped to prepare you to write your paper?
3. What activities did you find least useful? What would have made them more useful for you?
4. What are a couple of things you learned about writing this unit?
5. What are a couple of concrete ways your writing has improved in this unit?
6. What would you have continued to try to improve in your paper if you would have had another week to work on it?

After students answer these questions, I ask students to share their responses with the larger group and let students know that I am genuinely interested in their feedback and how I can make productive changes for the next unit.

Finally, I ask students to turn in their responses so that I can thoroughly read them later.

These questions suggest options for improving your mid-semester and end-of-semester course evaluations.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSES

No one would want to use all of these questions. But by choosing a few and adapting them to fit your particular course and assignments, you'll be able to obtain some insight into how students perceive the writing component of your course and how writing has enhanced students' learning.

So that we can improve this course during the rest of this semester / So that I can improve this course in future semesters, please answer these questions honestly, and explain your answers as fully as possible.

Part I: Overall Assessment of the Writing Assignments

1. How much / in what ways have the writing assignments helped you learn the subject matter of the course?
2. Has the writing helped you read course material more effectively? Understand key concepts in the course? Prepare for exams?
3. How much / in what ways has your writing improved as a result of completing the writing assignments in this course?
4. What was most helpful about my responses to your writing?
5. How could my responses to your writing be more helpful?
6. What goals have you set for the second half of the semester? How might I support you as you continue to take risks and experiment with your writing?

Part II: Assessment of Specific Writing Assignments

1. Were my expectations for (the journal, microtheme, response papers, research paper, etc.) clear? Why did you feel that way?
2. Was the purpose for this assignment clear? That is, did it seem to fit in well with the other activities and aims of the course? How would you explain the purposes of this assignment?
3. How could this assignment be improved?
4. Would you have liked additional help as you wrote this assignment? What kind of help?
5. What do you feel that you have learned as a result of doing this writing (journal, research paper, etc.)?
6. What was your experience in submitting a draft and then revising based on my comments? How could this process be improved?
7. What did you learn from participating in the peer review group? Specifically, what kinds of feedback did you give to members of your group? What kinds of feedback did you receive from your peers, and how did that feedback influence your revision? How could the peer review be improved?
8. What types of lessons (e.g., one-on-one conferences, peer review, mini-lectures, large-group discussions, writing workshops, freewriting) have been most helpful in your completing assignments / learning about writing in this course? Why were these lessons effective, or how did they influence your learning?

Kate Vieira uses this end-of-semester evaluation to solicit student opinions about their writing development over the course of a semester.

Kate Vieira
English

STUDENT EVALUATION FOR THE WRITING COMPONENT OF A COURSE

Standard departmental evaluations usually tell me how students felt about my class, but not what specifically helped them learn to become better writers. In contrast, this evaluation allows students to express what in particular worked for them, what didn't, and why. It lets me compare the usefulness of various activities, understand how students have perceived the course's value, and revise my course.

Teaching, like writing, can always be revised. Please answer the following questions as completely and thoughtfully as possible to help in this revision process.

1. My writing development in this class benefits from writing assignments: (Please explain why)

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

2. My writing development in this class benefits from peer review: (Please explain why)

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

3. My writing development in this class benefits from individual conferences with my instructor: (Please explain why)

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

4. My writing development in this class benefits from full class workshops: (Please explain why)

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

5. The instructor connects in-class activities to class assignments in useful ways:

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

6. The class challenges me to work hard on my writing:

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

7. The instructor's comments help me with my writing:

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

8. My awareness of my writing process has increased:

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

9. I feel more confident in my ability to write:

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

10. The instructor fosters a welcome and inclusive classroom:

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

11. What is the most useful thing you've learned in this class about writing or about yourself as a writer?

12. How do you think you might use what you are learning in this class in the future, in your academic, your professional, or other aspects of your life?

13. What else would you like your instructor to know about your experience in this class as a writer, a student, and/or a reader of others' writing?

Further Resources for Instructors and Students

Brad Hughes, Director of the UW-Madison Writing Center, offers suggestions on how to help your students best take advantage of Writing Center instruction.

The Writing Center, UW-Madison
6171 Helen C. White Hall
http://writing.wisc.edu
writing@wisc.edu
263-1992

ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO USE THE WRITING CENTER EFFECTIVELY

1. Encourage *all* of your students to take advantage of Writing Center instruction. Talk briefly about the Center in class several times during the semester. Explain that all writers—no matter how experienced—can benefit from talking about a piece of writing in progress.

2. Once you're able to, offer a personal endorsement of Writing Center instruction.

3. Mention the Writing Center on your writing assignments. Something like the following works well: "If you would like some help organizing ideas for your paper or some constructive criticism of a draft, make an appointment to see a Writing Center instructor. The Center is located in 6171 Helen C. White Hall. Hours: Monday–Thursday, 9:00 a.m. –8:30 p.m.; Friday, 9:00–3:00; Phone: 263-1992."

4. Invite a Writing Center staff member to make a brief presentation in your classes. To request such a presentation you can either 1) return the form on the memo you'll receive in your mailbox at the beginning of each term; 2) complete our online request form, http://writing.wisc.edu/Forms/outreach.html; or 3) call (263-3823) or email (bthughes@wisc.edu) Brad Hughes, the director of the Writing Center.

5. Encourage students to plan ahead with their writing so that they can consult with you as they write and so that they can benefit from Writing Center instruction. The Center is often booked up several days in advance, and last-minute visits don't give Writing Center instructors time to teach or students time to learn.

6. For students in need of more help, insist on meeting with them yourself. During that conference, strongly encourage them to work with you and with a Writing Center instructor on future papers, and explain how that will help them. This kind of personal referral, made during a meeting with you, will work much better than will a written referral in a comment on a student's paper.

7. If you want to require some Writing Center instruction *for particular students*, that's fine. For selected students, something like this works well: "For your next paper (or before you submit a revision of this paper), I want you to make *at least two appointments with the same instructor* in the Writing Center." Please *do not*, though, require an entire class to come for Writing Center instruction. And please don't offer students extra credit for coming.

8. For students you're *really* concerned about, who have serious problems with the writing in your course—above all, don't wait to do something! Insist on seeing them right away. Arrange to meet with these students while they're in the process of writing their next paper. Make the kind of referral suggested in #7 above. Talk with the director of the Writing Center (Brad Hughes, 3-3823, bthughes@wisc.edu) about strategies for helping students.

9. Please have realistic expectations for how much and how quickly Writing Center instruction can help your students, especially second-language writers. Alas, we cannot perform miracles. Our instructors will face the same challenges you do in teaching your students to become better writers. It takes time, sustained instruction, and hard work on a student's part to make significant progress.

10. Announce upcoming Writing Center classes and encourage your students to attend them. They really can help students excel in your course. Consider attending a class yourself so that you can recommend them to students based on first-hand knowledge.

11. Follow up with the students you've referred to the Center. Ask them when they've gone and what they've worked on. Call or email the director of the Writing Center (Brad Hughes, 3-3823, bthughes@wisc.edu) to ask about your students' work at the Writing Center.

12. If you've never been to the Writing Center yourself, call or email Brad Hughes; he will be very glad to arrange a tour.

You might consider mentioning some of these valuable student resources—or others—on your syllabus. You're in an important position to recognize students' needs and to help them seek out resources on campus.

CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

Campus Information	Campus and Community Information Welcome Desk Union South 263-2400
Personal Problems, Academic Honesty, and Plagiarism	Dean of Students Office Division of Student Life 70 Bascom Hall 263-5700 http://www.students.wisc.edu/
Personal Counseling	University Counseling Services 333 East Campus Mall 265-5600 http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/services/counseling/
Health Services	University Health Services 333 E. Campus Mall 265-5600 http://www.uhs.wisc.edu
Academic Advising and Regulations	Cross-College Advising Service 1155 Observatory Drive 265-5460 http://www.ccas.wisc.edu/
Student Academic Affairs Offices, within each School/College	Letters & Science Academic and Career Advising Services Middleton Building, Suite 155 262-5858 http://www.advising.ls.wisc.edu College of Agriculture 116 Ag Hall 262-3003 College of Engineering 1150 Engineering Hall 262-2473 School of Nursing K6/146 Clinical Science Center 263-5202 School of Business 3150 Grainger Hall 262-0471 School of Education 1194 Nancy Nicholas Hall 262-1651 School of Human Ecology B312 Sterling Hall 262-2608
Job Searches, Placement, Resumes	L&S Career Services Middleton Building, Suite 205 262-3921 http://www.lssaa.wisc.edu/careers/
Multicultural Student Center	*MSC* 2nd Floor, Red Gym 262-4503 http://msc.wisc.edu/msc/
Returning Adult Students	Adult Career and Special Student Services 21 N. Park Street, Suite 7101 263-6960 http://www.continuingstudies.wisc.edu/advising
Assistance for Students with Disabilities	McBurney Disability Resource Center 702 W. Johnson Street, Suite 2104 263-2741; text: 225-7956 http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/
Tutoring	Center for Academic Excellence B47 Bascom Hall 263-5068 http://www.cae.ls.wisc.edu Chemistry Learning Center B311 Chemistry Building 265-5497 http://www.chem.wisc.edu/areas/clc/ GUTS Peer Tutoring Program 333 E. Campus Mall, Office 4413 263-5666 http://guts.studentorg.wisc.edu/ Math Tutorial Program 321 Van Vleck 263-6817 Business Learning Center 2240 Grainger Hall http://www.bus.wisc.edu/blc/ Center for Educational Opportunity 16 Ingraham Hall 265-5106 http://www.ceo.wisc.edu The Writing Center 6171 Helen C. White Hall 263-1992 http://writing.wisc.edu

The following campus resources provide support for teaching and learning.

Campus Resources for Faculty, Instructional Staff, and TAs

Teaching and Learning Excellence
Annotated links to resources about teaching and learning, sponsored by the provost's office.
https://tle.wisc.edu/

Center for the First-Year Experience (CFYE)
CFYE "cultivates and enhances the first-year experience at UW–Madison."
http://www.newstudent.wisc.edu/index.html

Teaching Academy
Composed of Fellows and Future Faculty Partners, the Teaching Academy "encourages innovation, experimentation, dialogue, and scholarship around issues related to teaching and learning. . . The Academy works with partners across campus, and sponsors a number of events aimed at fostering a high level of instructional excellence across campus."
https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy

DoIT Academic Technology
DoIT offers "instructional technology consultations, and training; assistance with Learn@UW (campus course management system); Engage Award funding for exploration of technologies to meet teaching challenges; multimedia equipment and software, and assistance for use; and student training for software needed for coursework."
https://www.doit.wisc.edu/about/organization/academic-technology//

Teaching and Learning Symposium
"The annual Teaching and Learning Symposium provides an opportunity for faculty, staff, post-docs, and grad students to share best practices, celebrate accomplishments, discuss new pedagogy, and explore themes of mutual interest in a community dedicated to enriching the learning experience on campus."
http://www.learning.wisc.edu/tlsymposium/

L&S Learning Support Services
"The staff in Learning Support Services proudly serve students, faculty and staff in the UW-Madison College of Letters & Science by promoting and supporting the thoughtful use of technology for teaching and learning."
http://lss.wisc.edu/

Delta Program
"The Delta Program is a research, teaching and learning community for faculty, academic staff, post-docs, and graduate students that will help current and future faculty succeed in the changing landscape of science, engineering, and math higher education."
http://www.delta.wisc.edu/

Library and Information Literacy Instruction
"Librarians can collaborate with faculty to help students develop the skills, strategies, and knowledge base needed to find, evaluate, and use information effectively."
http://library.wisc.edu/instruction/

CIRTL (Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning)
Funded by the National Science Foundation, "CIRTL promotes the development of a national faculty in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) committed to implementing and advancing effective teaching practices for diverse student audiences as part of their professional careers."
http://www.cirtl.net/

Academic Initiatives in University Housing
University Residential Halls offer students a range of academic initiatives, including tutoring, residential learning communities, and courses offered in the dorms.
http://www.housing.wisc.edu/academics

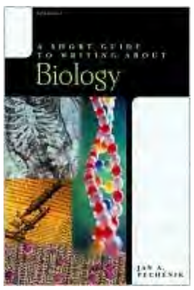
These writing guides by Pearson-Longman and Oxford University Press can help students understand common writing genres and expectations in your discipline.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS ON WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES

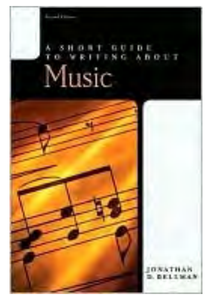
These texts are designed to teach the writing process, explain writing conventions, and identify ways of thinking and writing specific to some major academic disciplines. In addition to answering frequently asked questions, these books provide sample student papers and published articles to illustrate research and writing in such fields as biology, history, art, psychology, and chemistry.

Although it's unlikely that advice offered in these supplemental texts will line up perfectly with your course assignments and expectations, these guides offer disciplinary insights into writing that students, especially majors, can carry with them from semester to semester. The series is generally pitched toward advanced undergraduates and even graduate students interested in explicit writing instruction, as authors focus on discipline-specific genres and preparing manuscripts for publication in addition to more introductory information about the writing process.

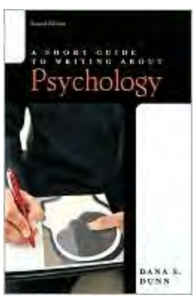
The Pearson-Longman Short Guides



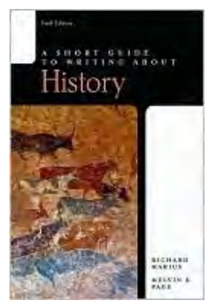
A Short Guide to Writing about Biology by Jan A. Pechenik (6th ed., 2007)



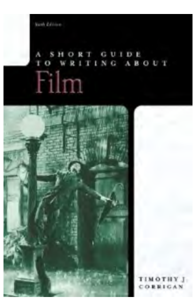
A Short Guide to Writing about Music by Jonathan D. Bellman (2nd ed., 2007)



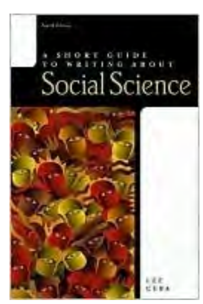
A Short Guide to Writing about Psychology by Dana S. Dunn (2nd ed., 2008)



A Short Guide to Writing about History by Richard Marius and Melvin E. Page (6th ed., 2007)

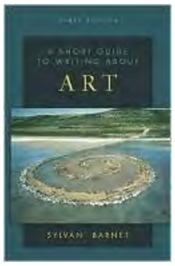


A Short Guide to Writing about Film by Timothy L. Corrigan (6th ed., 2007)

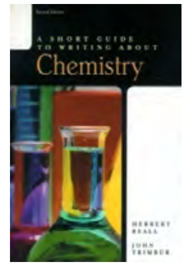


A Short Guide to Writing about Social Science by Lee Cuba (4th ed., 2002)

Supplemental Text on Writing in the Disciplines, continued.



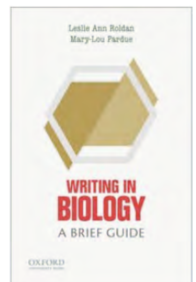
A Short Guide to Writing about Art by
Sylvan Barnet (9th ed., 2008)



A Short Guide to Writing about Chemistry by
Herbert Beall and John Trimbur (2nd ed., 2001)

The Oxford University Press Brief Guides to Writing in the Disciplines

Writing in Anthropology: A Brief Guide by
Shan-Estelle Brown (2016)



Writing in Biology: A Brief Guide by Leslie
Ann Roldan and Mary-Lou Pardue (2016)

Writing in Engineering: A Brief Guide by
Robert Irish (2016)

Writing in Nursing: A Brief Guide by
Thomas Lawrence Long and Cheryl
Tatano Beck (2016)

Writing in Political Science: A Brief Guide
by Mike LaVaque-Manty and Danielle
LaVaque-Manty (2016)

Writing in Sociology: A Brief Guide by
Lynn Smith-Lovin and Cary Moskovitz (2016)

Information about the Undergraduate Writing Fellows Program.

Emily Hall, Director
Writing Fellows Program

THE UNDERGRADUATE WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM

Please consider working with a Writing Fellow in your writing-intensive or Comm-B course!

Writing Fellows are talented, carefully selected, and extensively trained undergraduates who serve as peer writing tutors in classes across the College of Letters & Science. The Fellows make thoughtful comments on drafts of assigned papers and hold conferences with students to help students make smart, significant revisions to their papers *before* the papers are turned in for a grade. Building on the special trust that peers can share, Fellows help students not only to write better papers but also to take themselves more seriously as writers and thinkers.

Here's a faculty comment about the benefits of working with Writing Fellows:

"[The Writing Fellows] were outstanding in their ability to motivate students to adhere to the assignment. In particular, they made sure the students stated and developed arguments in their papers and pushed them to address the readings and important themes from the course."
-Professor Katherine Cramer Walsh, Political Science

Here's a comment from a student who received help from a Fellow:

"I found that talking to someone about my paper helped me figure out exactly what I wanted to say and how I could do that…. This was the first experience I've had with a Writing Fellow and I thought it was extremely beneficial in improving my writing skills."
-Junior, sociology major

The Fellows are equipped to tutor writing across the L&S curriculum. In the past, they have worked with students in astronomy, Afro- American studies, history, philosophy, political science chemistry, classics, English, women's studies, sociology, zoology, mathematics, psychology, geography, and more.

You are eligible to apply to work with a Writing Fellow if you:

- are a faculty or academic staff member teaching a course with at least two writing assignments
- will have between 12 and 40 students enrolled in the course
- are willing to adjust your syllabus to allow time for revision and to require that all enrolled students work with the assigned Fellow(s)
- are willing to meet regularly with the assigned Fellow(s) to discuss assignments

If you would like to learn more about the program or apply to work with a Fellow in a course you are teaching, please return the form on the reverse as soon as possible. We will contact you to discuss your plans and explain the program in detail. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Emily Hall, Director of the Writing Fellows Program (ebhall@wisc.edu, 263-3754) or Brad Hughes, Director of the Writing Center (bthughes@wisc.edu, 263-3823).