English 110 Faculty Development Workshop

Assignment Swap and Section Profiles
April 8, 2009

Goals
- To share ENG 110-objectives-oriented assignments and activities that we enjoy teaching.
- To showcase two approaches to sequencing and supporting assignments.

Responding to Faculty Requests
Faculty often ask for sample syllabi and sample assignments and have asked for a few samples of how colleagues structure day-to-day activities in support of their section’s writing assignments. This session responds to these requests by facilitating an assignment swap and profiling two colleagues’ writing assignments.

Assignment Swap
Copies of the following assignments are scattered around the table. If you’d like to see one that you couldn’t find a copy of today, please check our Blackboard site.

- Advocacy (MaryBeth Short)
- Cultural Studies Textual Analysis (Murphy Townsend)
- Current Events Op-Ed (Greg Hlavaty)
- English 110 Invention Strategies (Megan Isaac)
- Imitation Paper (Will Duffy)
- Odd Object Essay (Paula Patch)
- Wiki Assignment (Jessie Moore)

Section Profiles

- Richard Lee’s Section
  Writing (From Prof. Lee’s Syllabus)
  The writing expected of you in this class will be in the following formats:

  Formal Papers
  You will write three formal papers, each 5-7 or 7-9 pages in length.
  Paper 1: Informative - Writing Across the Curriculum. (5-7 pgs)
  Paper 2: Deliberative - Effecting Change-Problem (7-9 pgs)
  Paper 3: Deliberative - Effecting Change-Solution. (7-9 pgs)

  Each paper is to be typed, double-spaced and submitted with a title page detailing title of paper, name of student, class and semester. MLA documentation for any outside sources is an absolute must. Lack of proper internal documentation or Works Cited page will fail a paper; no exceptions!! Papers are due on the dates indicated. Late papers will be deducted a letter grade for every day they are late. All assignments are to be BOUND, STAPLED or submitted in LABELED FOLDERS. NO LOOSE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED

  Written Assignments
  Along with the formal papers, you will be required to complete smaller written assignments. Normally 2-3 pages in length, these assignments are comprised of the following:
Process/Drafting form- Tracks your process of invention, pre-writing, drafting, and revision of formal essays.

Written Responses: Short essays that help you engage in the English 110 Goals and Objectives.

Editorial letter: Submission of editorial letter to your local newspaper on a community issue.

Evaluation of Texts- Your written analysis and/or editing of assigned published articles and essays

Rebecca Pope-Ruark’s Section

Course Projects & Grade Distribution (From the Dr. Pope-Ruark’s Syllabus)

You can expect to work on the following projects during the semester, and I will provide a detailed assignment sheet and reading list for each assignment.

Project Preview: Millennials Writing autobiography 5pts Wks 1-2
Project 1: Responding to Argument 15pts Wks 2-5
Project 2: Theme Research Paper/Recommendation 20pts Wks 5-8
Project 3: Team Field Research Project
  Research Presentation 5pts Wk 12
Project 4: Final Book Creation/Portfolio 20pts Wks 8-12
  Exams: Rhetorical Strategies Midterm 5pts Wk 6
  Final Exam 5pts Final Exam

Project 1: Responding to Argument – In this assignment you will chose a common thread among several generational readings we will do (one specifically related to education and/or writing skills). You will synthesize their perspectives and create an argument for your position based on these authors’ discussions and your personal experiences. Your audience will be one of the authors you are responding to.

Project 2: Theme Research Paper/Recommendation – Hopefully continuing your theme from Project 1, you will do library research on your theme, adding knowledge and perspective to what you have read in class already. Based on this research as support, you will write a short recommendation argument. Your audience will be a fictional Presidential Taskforce on generational differences here at Elon, again focusing on some aspect of education and/or writing skills.

Project 3: Team Research Project – You will be placed in small teams based on similar issues dealt with in your field reports. As a group, you might conduct more library research on your topic to present a balanced perspective on the issue and recommendations for how this issue can be given more attention on campus. You will also create a field research plan (which might involve observation of students, a survey, interviews, a focus group) and collect field data to test your hypotheses. Your audience is an academic professor/class. You will also give a team presentation to the class.

Project 4: Book Creation/Portfolio – For this project which we will work on in parts throughout the semester, we will form special editorial teams as well as functional groups (layout, art, final editing, etc.) in order to put your papers together into a cohesive group. Your group paper will definitely go in the book, and you can choose which of your other projects you would like to submit for inclusion. You can expect to do additional self-editing as well as receive editorial changes from the editorial team in order to help your paper the strongest it can be for our collection. We’ll write a collective introduction to the text, write intros to each section, decide on book conventions to be included, lay out the book, design cover art and inside art, and publish the book through lulu.com.
For each project, we will do a variety of different planning, drafting, workshopping, and revising exercises in which you are required to participate. **Version 1s of your papers (sometimes called drafts) are not optional nor are peer workshopping or instructor conferencing.** Version 1s should be a complete paper, not some thoughts on paper. If you do not turn in a complete Version 1 when required, you will automatically lose 1 full grade step on the project. If you miss an editing workshop or conference, you will automatically lose 1/3 grade step on the project.

Tips for Course Planning
Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe provide helpful course design strategies in *Understanding by Design*. One of the most compelling portions of their work is their presentation of backwards design, a process that forefronts the results we want students to achieve and then works backwards through acceptable evidence that students have achieved those results and through learning experiences and instruction that support students’ progress.

1. **Backwards Design – Enduring Understanding**
   Wiggins and McTighe begin backwards design by asking faculty to consider what students should develop an enduring understanding of, what is important for students to know and do, and what is worth knowing. In English 110, our objectives and shared experiences fit this category of “enduring understanding” and should serve as our starting point for our course planning. **Please list the course objectives – as they are articulated in your ENG 110 faculty notebook and on the course website – on your syllabus. This simple step helps demonstrate to students and others that we have shared learning outcomes for the course, even though we each may employ different assignments to support those outcomes. Thanks for your help!**

2. **Backwards Design – Acceptable Evidence of Learning**
   The next step in backwards design is determining acceptable evidence. How do we know that students have met the objectives or achieved our desired results? What assignments and classroom activities might provide evidence that students have met learning outcomes (our objectives)?

3. **Backwards Design – Learning Experiences and Instruction**
   Finally, Wiggins and McTighe encourage teachers to brainstorm what learning experiences and instruction students will need to successfully progress towards the desired outcomes. For instance, what do we need to teach students about source use and what types of practice can we provide them in order to help them prepare to synthesize research to support an argument? What learning experiences and instruction do we need to provide to prepare students to produce the assignments we identified in step 2 as acceptable evidence of learning?

Upcoming English 110 Events – Mark Your Calendars
- College Writing Showcase – April 27th, 5:30-6:30 PM, ALAM 318
- Direct Assessment Packets due to Jessie – May 22nd
Materials for Richard Lee’s Assignments

“Pear Bear” readings in Meeting of Minds (pp. 17-23)

The following questions involve moral dilemmas that call for your making a decision based on your values. I will assign a moral dilemma to you and you will need to make a decision and defend that decision. Your decision is basically an argument and I want you to understand the process you went through in making that decision. Using the Argumentative/Rhetoric Model I introduced, I ask that you fill out each item of the model so you can track the substance and structure of your decision. You need to fully explain your reasons and the values behind your decision. General statements and reasons are not allowed. When finished, each student will be asked to explain and defend his or her decision.

1. You are the proud parent of a beautiful one year old baby. You discover, however, that because of a mix up at the hospital, your real baby was switched and given to another couple. The baby you have had for a year really belongs to them. The news has been given to you in confidence, but not the other family. Do you contact them?

2. In a series of vivid and moving dreams, God comes to you and tells you to quit school, leave your family and friends, travel to Israel and become a poor fisherman on the Dead Sea. What decision would you make if God asked you to totally forsake your family, never to see them again?

3. You are engaged to be married. A month before the wedding, your fiancé is involved in a car accident and is rendered a paraplegic, unable to move or feel from the neck down. Your fiancé thinks it best that you both don’t get married. What do you do?

4. If you had the choice to be average looking and live a normal life span, or stunningly beautiful but have five years taken off your life, which would you choose?

5. Which would you choose: a mild, predictable life that holds happiness and no shocking setbacks, or the wild, turbulent life of a tortured genius who creates beautiful artistic work?

6. You are driving with a friend. Your friend is playing around, not paying attention to the road, and is responsible for an accident. You are asked to give your testimony about what happened. Do you “stretch the truth” to save your friend?

- from The Book of Questions
Argument/Rhetorical Model

Premise/Position (This is your decision/argument)

Claims/Reasons (These are the reasons you use in feeling that your decision/argument is the right choice for you or anyone in your decision.)

Appeals/Evidence (These are what you would use to back up your reasons. Appeals would be either logical or emotional. Evidence would be factual, but even facts can reflect logic and emotion.)

Refutation/Counter Argument (Briefly consider any objections to your decision. How would you answer these objections in defending your decision?)

In-Class Assignment: Students evaluate effectiveness – strengths/weaknesses – of each argument presented in “In Their Own Words: Bush and Kerry”

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In Their Own Words: Bush and Kerry

Published: September 8, 2004 in The New York Times

President Bush

Remarks yesterday in Columbia, Mo.:

"Our strategy is succeeding. Four years ago Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaeda, Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups, Saudi was fertile ground for terrorist fund-raising, Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons, Iraq was a gathering threat, and Al Qaeda was largely unchallenged as it planned attack.

Because we acted, the government of a free Afghanistan is fighting terror, Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders, Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests, Libya is dismantling its weapons
programs, the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom and more than three-quarters of Al Qaeda's members and associates have been brought to justice. We have led, many have joined, and America and the world are safer. ... 

We are also serving a vital and historic cause that will make our country safer. Free societies in the Middle East will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentment and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight terrorists instead of harboring them, and that makes America more secure and the world more peaceful.

So our mission in Afghanistan and Iraq is clear. We'll help new leaders train their armies. We want Iraqis and Afghan citizens doing the hard work of defending freedom. We'll help them through their elections. We'll move - we'll get them on the path of stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will return home with the honor they have earned."

**Senator John Kerry**

*Remarks yesterday in Greensboro, N.C.:*

Right now as we sit here, your tax dollars are being used today, yesterday, all last year, tomorrow, your tax dollars are actually being used to reward the company that takes the jobs overseas.

That’s bad enough, but you know there’s something worse, don’t you? It gets worse than that in terms of choices. Today the tax code actually does something that’s right. It actually gives tax breaks to companies that export American products, not jobs, and if you sell more products overseas, and you create more jobs here at home, then those companies get lower taxes so they can grow and hire more people.

Sounds like a pretty good idea, right? Well, George Bush doesn’t think so. He’s wrong again. He wants to end that tax cut, a good incentive that helps the U.S. companies make the jobs here, and he wants — those companies are going to see their taxes raised, and he’s going to take the money from that and give the money to those companies getting a reward for taking the jobs overseas, which will actually encourage more companies to go overseas.


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After completion of previous assignment, students are asked to compare/discuss their evaluation with Fish’s assessment in “The Candidates, Seen From the Classroom.” Both written and oral response.

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**The Candidates, Seen From the Classroom**

By **STANLEY FISH**
CHICAGO — In an unofficial but very formal poll taken in my freshman writing class the other day, George Bush beat John Kerry by a vote of 13 to 2 (14 to 2, if you count me). My students were not voting on the candidates' ideas. They were voting on the skill (or lack of skill) displayed in the presentation of those ideas.

The basis for their judgments was a side-by-side display in this newspaper on Sept. 8 of excerpts from speeches each man gave the previous day. Put aside whatever preferences you might have for either candidate's positions, I instructed; just tell me who does a better job of articulating his positions, and why.

The analysis was devastating. President Bush, the students pointed out, begins with a perfect topic sentence - "Our strategy is succeeding"- that nicely sets up a first paragraph describing how conditions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia four years ago aided terrorists. This is followed by a paragraph explaining how the administration's policies have produced a turnaround in each country "because we acted." The paragraph's conclusion is concise, brisk and earned: "We have led, many have joined, and America and the world are safer."

It doesn't hurt that the names of the countries he lists all have the letter "a," as do the words "America" and "safer." He and his speechwriters deserve credit for using the accident of euphony to give the argument cohesiveness and force. There is of course no logical relationship between the repetition of a sound and the soundness of an argument, but if it is skillfully employed repetition can enhance a logical point or even give the illusion of one when none is present.

The students also found repetition in the Kerry speech, about the outsourcing of jobs, but, as many pointed out, when Mr. Kerry repeats the phrase "your tax dollars" it is because he has become lost in his own sentence and has to begin again.

When he finally extracts himself from that sentence, he makes two big mistakes in the next one: "That's bad enough, but you know there's something worse, don't you?" No, Senator Kerry, we don't know - because you haven't told us. He is asking people to respond to a point he hasn't yet made and, even worse, by saying "don't you?" he is implying they should know what this point is before he makes it. As a result, the audience is made to feel stupid.

And if that wasn't "bad enough," consider his next two sentences. Up until now Mr. Kerry's point (insofar as you could discern one) had been that current tax policies reward companies for moving their operations overseas. But he goes on to add, "it gets worse than that in terms of choices." The audience barely has time to wonder what and whose choices he's talking about before it is entirely disoriented by the declaration that "today the tax code actually does something that's right." Excuse us, but how can getting something "right" be "worse"? It turns out that there is an answer to that question later in the speech - Mr. Kerry says that while the tax code now rewards companies that export American products, Mr. Bush wants to eliminate that good incentive - but it comes far too late for an audience discombobulated by the sudden and unannounced change in the argument's direction.
Senator Kerry, my students observed with a mix of solemnity and glee, has violated two cardinal rules of exposition: don't presume your audience has information you haven't provided, and always pay attention to the expectations of your listeners. They also felt that when he concludes by declaring that "when I'm president of the United States, it'll take me about a nanosecond to ask the Congress to close that stupid loophole," he undercuts the dignity both of his message and of the office he aspires to by calling the loophole "stupid" (instead of "unconscionable" or "unprincipled" or even "criminal"). "Stupid," one student said, is not a "presidential kind of word."

So what? What does it matter if Mr. Kerry's words stumble and halt, while Mr. Bush's flow easily from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph? Well, listen to the composite judgments my students made on the Democratic challenger: "confused," "difficult to understand," "can't seem to make his point clearly," "I'm not sure what he's saying," and my favorite, "he's kind of 'skippy,' all over the place."

Now of course it could be the case that every student who voted against Mr. Kerry's speech in my little poll will vote for him in the general election. After all, what we're talking about here is merely a matter of style, not substance, right? And - this is a common refrain among Kerry supporters - doesn't Mr. Bush's directness and simplicity of presentation reflect a simplicity of mind and an incapacity for nuance, while Mr. Kerry's ideas are just too complicated for the rhythms of publicly accessible prose?

Sorry, but that's dead wrong. If you can't explain an idea or a policy plainly in one or two sentences, it's not yours; and if it's not yours, no one you speak to will be persuaded of it, or even know what it is, or (and this is the real point) know what you are. Words are not just the cosmetic clothing of some underlying integrity; they are the operational vehicles of that integrity, the visible manifestation of the character to which others respond. And if the words you use fall apart, ring hollow, trail off and sound as if they came from nowhere or anywhere (these are the same thing), the suspicion will grow that what they lack is what you lack, and no one will follow you.

Nervous Democrats who see their candidate slipping in the polls console themselves by saying, "Just wait, the debates are coming." As someone who will vote for John Kerry even though I voted against him in my class, that's just what I'm worried about.

Stanley Fish is dean emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago.


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Paper 2 – Problem/Position Paper

You are to write a 5-7 pg. Argumentative Essay that deals with a problem or position. Using the Rhetorical Model/Academic Argument formats:
you will craft an organized, researched argument. You will need to employ the same strategies and process – Prewriting, Drafting and Revision – that you used in the Informative Paper.

The things you need to keep in mind are:

The 5-7 page length does not include title page and Works Cited. Your 5-7 page length is the body of your essay. This is a research paper so proper MLA documentation is required. LACK OF PROPER MLA DOCUMENTATION, WHETHER INTENTIONAL OR SIMPLY AN OVERSIGHT, WILL FAIL A PAPER.

This is a formal paper, so the proper format – found on the class syllabus – and correct grammar and usage are to be followed. Your essay needs to be STAPLED or submitted in LABELED FOLDERS. NO LOOSE PAPERS.

You are also required to keep current with your Process/Progress form. This allows both you and me to track areas of strength and weaknesses in your Prewriting/Drafting/Revision.

Below I list the English 110 goals that this writing assignment fulfills.

**Goals**

- Understand the purposes of writing and your role as a writer.
- Engage in a sophisticated writing process.
- Understand and engage in public/private argument through critical and rhetorical methods.

**Objectives**

- Write to persuade by analyzing, interpreting, researching, synthesizing, and evaluating a wide variety of claims.
- Write according to various purposes and audiences (academic, public, and professional).
- Write effectively and confidently using a writing process that employs a variety of sophisticated strategies.
- Adhere to MLA style documentation.

The Rough Draft for Paper 2 is Nov 8. Rough Draft Conferences will be Nov 13 & 15. The final draft is due NOV 20.

**Paper 3 – Solution**

Think ahead to the topic of your 3rd and final major paper. In paper 3 you will propose a viable solution to the problem/position you argued in paper 2. So while you are drafting paper 2, keep in mind how you will offer a solution to the problem you have identified. I will talk more about the approach of paper 3 in class.
Our theme for this semester is “reading and writing in your generation.” To help us start thinking about that and how that theme might relate to you, you will use your first graded writing assignment to introduce me and your classmates to your writing experience. This is essentially a diagnostic essay and an opportunity for you to both introduce your experiences and demonstrate your writing ability.

Project Goals

- Engage in one full writing process cycle, including invention, planning, drafting, reviewing, and revising, in order to better understand your own process
- Make connections between the personal and the public and how writing can mediate the two
- Understand how personal experience allows you to reflect on yourself as well as to potentially affect others’ opinions or actions

Audience and Genre

2-3 page, types double spaced essay written to your instructor and your classmates. Keep in mind that the class might decide to include these essays in our book as author introductions, so you might have another audience later in the semester for this piece.

Assignment Tasks

Tell us about your reading and or writing experience in an interesting and a meaningful way. You can do this in a variety of ways. For example, you might choose to

- Talk about writing or reading as a theme in your life
- Talk about a book or writing exercise that changed the way you think about or approach writing
- Tell the story of one experience that helped form your opinion about writing or reading
- Report back on a mini-experiment – keep a reading/writing journal for at least 4-6 hours in which you make a note of every time you read/write something (where were you, who was it for, what was the point, etc.). What did you learn about your writing habits from your journal?

For example, I find I gravitate toward certain books at certain times in my life. So I might write an essay about how I have used books throughout my life the way some people use food, for comfort.

You might come up with your own option as well. Most importantly, your paper should

- Tell us something meaningful about your reading or writing experience
- Discuss how you came to feel the way you did about reading/writing and if you think that’s a good place to be
- Use your best essay format, best grammar and punctuation

These points will also be used as the grading criteria for this assignment.

Expected Assignment Process

Here’s an overview of the likely in- and out-of-class stages we’ll take to complete the project.

1. Discuss assignment in class 2.5
2. Engage in your own writing process over the weekend to write Version 1
3. Bring complete Version 1 to class 2.10 for peer review (students without a complete Version 1 will lose 2 points – one for no version 1 and 1 for not being able to participate in peer review)
4. Participate in peer review of essays, provide helpful feedback to peers
5. Revise Version 1 out of class
6. Upload final Version 2 to BB before class on 2.12

English 110: College Writing
Project 1: Responding to Argument
Points: 15
Due Date: Thursday, 2.26.09, to Blackboard BEFORE class

We all have opinion on just about everything. Some of us are very good about expressing opinions whether our listeners want to hear them or not, while others like to keep their opinions to themselves or prefer to go along with the group. In College Writing and Public Writing, most people won’t care about your personal opinions if they are based solely on your opinion (for example, your professor or boss probably won’t care about your general opinions about the way s/he runs things). On the other hand, opinions backed up by appropriate and selective research and supporting a realistic thesis are often better received by others.

You all had some gut reactions the first day of class when I told you some of the titles of the books that people are writing about your generation. Here’s your chance to read some of those texts and respond directly to the authors, through appropriate information synthesis and experience arguments.

Project Goals
• Engage in one full writing process cycle, including invention, planning, drafting, reviewing, and revising, in order to better understand your own process
• Make connections between the personal and the public and how writing can mediate the two
• Understand preliminarily how to synthesize others’ arguments and use them as a basis to support your own thesis
• Understand how arguments drawing on personal experience allow you to reflect on yourself as well as to potentially affect others’ opinions or actions

Assignment Strategies in Practice
• Conceiving and developing a piece with careful attention to purpose and audience by assessing rhetorical choices and sticking to rhetorical decisions
• Using different invention, planning and revising techniques to strengthen your writing and develop your writing process
• Making a rhetorically effective argument using synthesis and experience as the major support for a public audience by both submitting for a grade and mailing/posting the letter

Audience and Genre
Personal letter, following all conventions/standards, to the author of one text you are responding to.

Assignment Tasks
Choose a theme from the readings we have done so far related to your generation and its reading or writing skills that is interesting to you and to which you can speak personally. Your job is to synthesize and analyze the information in the texts, develop an argument about that theme drawing on your personal experience, and write a response letter to the author drawing on your personal experience and the readings.
After completing your final letter, write a “Dear RPR” letter in which you explain your writing process (i.e. what stages/activities you did, how you wrote, what specific rhetorical choices you made about writer, audience, text, design) to ME specifically as your College Writing instructor, what you think you did well in the essay (and why), and 2-3 specific areas of concern you have that you would especially like me to comment on when grading. The Dear RPR letter is NOT optional; you will lose up to 3 points for not turning one in or for turning in a shoddy last minute letter.

**Expected Assignment Process**

Here’s an overview of the likely in- and out-of-class stages we’ll take to complete the project. A Process document form will be made available for you to fill in during the assignment process.

7. Read the class excerpts from the books to get a sense of the themes and arguments made. Conduct your own Web and library explorations into how others have responded to these texts.
8. Brainstorm a list of possible themes you’d like to address in your letter and experiences you would be comfortable sharing as support for your position
9. Choose one theme to focus on; email me a rationale for your choice.
10. Use freewriting/cycling to plan your essay.
11. Draft essay using your invention exercises
12. Schedule and attend an instructor conference for 2.19
13. Revise draft according to instructor suggestions. Write up a short memo to peer reviewers explaining your concerns and questions about your piece so far, in order to help them address where you think your problems might be, and bring memo and electronic draft for Peer Reviewing Workshop
14. Peer-review your draft on 2.24. Review peer comments. Draft email to me by end of review session summarizing peer comments and your plans to incorporate or address them in your paper.
15. Workshop/revise essay in class after peer reviewing

**Assignment Evaluation Criteria**

I will use the following grade descriptions/informal rubric to assess your final papers and Dear RPR letters. If your paper falls somewhere between two whole grade descriptions, a plus or minus will be assigned and explained in my comments. Remember that the Dear RPR letter is worth 3 negative points (i.e. If you do it well, great. If you don’t do it, -3. If you do a shoddy, short letter, -some points):

A – Superior writing, grammar, and organization; written in a clear personal voice; obviously considered the audience and its needs; compelling introduction; clear synthesis and integration of information throughout; meaningful use of personal experience to make point to readers; written in style that will make the authors pay attention; took revision process and comments seriously to better the letter; 1-2 minor grammar mistakes if any; followed all assignment and **rhetorical** guidelines.

B – Strong paper that meets majority of assignment and **rhetorical** criteria; synthesis less clear in places but generally well used; use of experience might not be as clear as an A paper, but writer obviously trying to make a single point that the audience can relate to; more grammar, mechanics, organization issues than A paper but still better than average; strong attempts to integrate suggested revisions beyond surface editing; good opening and conclusion but could be more compelling read.

C – Average paper that meets most of the assignment criteria but does not exhibit any particular spark above and beyond the requirements; grammar and mechanics issues; organization needs work to be compelling; hit-and-miss with regards to effective synthesis of information; doesn’t seem to clearly make one point or clearly address the audience; reads more like a class paper than an argumentative letter; ignored most reviewing suggestions; requires major revisions.
D – Poor paper that strays from assignment or rhetorical criteria; grammar, mechanics, and organization problems; serious issues with organization, synthesis, narrative, purpose, and/or audience; unclear point of discussion; ignored all peer and instructor comments for revision; would not be considered for sending/posting unless completely redone.

F – Paper does not meet assignment requirements; obvious lack of thought or concern; no revising or editing; seems like it was typed up 10 minutes before class.

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<th>READINGS/WORK DUE TODAY</th>
<th>TOPICS TO BE COVERED</th>
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<td>Peer Review of Project Preview (mandatory)</td>
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<td>Due Version 1 of Project Preview assn</td>
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<td>Read Ch2 Ede</td>
<td>Reading Strategies</td>
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<td>Complete Green Box on p35. Bring to class</td>
<td>Intro to Project 1</td>
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<td>Read Ch8 Ede, pp216-223, 226-223</td>
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<td>Read Ch1 in Ede” highlight/ annotate important areas or questions Complete #1 on page 20. Bring to class electronically. Read pages 21-27 of Ch2 in Ede Complete the &quot;For Exploration&quot; on pp 26-27. Answer at least 5 questions honestly.</td>
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<td>Reading for Main Arguments</td>
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<td>Group 2: Dumbest Generation, ch2</td>
<td>Invention for Project 1</td>
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<td>Conduct Reading Inventory pg218 Ede for ch. SKIM ch9, Ede</td>
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<td>Group 1: Dumbest Generation, ch2</td>
<td>Analyzing Arguments</td>
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<td>Writing with a Purpose</td>
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<td>Ch4, Ede pp 80-98 – SKIP 83-4, 91-94 Answer Green Box, pg 95 Ede for your chapter SKIM ch10, Ede</td>
<td>Using Experience to Make a Point</td>
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<td>Write FULL draft</td>
<td>Integrating Quotes, Avoiding Plagiarism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th 2.26</td>
<td><strong>P1 Final version due by Blackboard Assignment Submission Before Class</strong></td>
<td>Intro to research project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bring COMPLETE P1.V2 electronically Read Chapter 12</td>
<td>Developing possible topics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research is a major part of the work you will do in your classes here at Elon, and learning how to research effectively and to present or argue your findings appropriately are important skills to develop. Good researchers are able to collect valuable information from a variety of sources—print, online, and primary—which they then evaluate for credibility and synthesize to make their own points effectively and ethically.

In project 1 you took two rhetorical steps beyond an opinion paper to create a synthesis/response argument connected to the two chapters we read. Each of you identified themes that interested you in the books and applied your experience and the other reading to the primary theme you were responding to. In project 2, you will continue to build on that foundation, taking two more rhetorical steps forward to research and write a well-argued recommendation to a fictional task force here on campus.

**Rhetorical Situation and Audience**

Assume that President Lambert has assembled a task force of students, faculty, staff, and administrators to assess the reading and writing challenges facing so-called Millennial students here at Elon. The task force consists of 3 senior staff members, 3 tenured faculty and 3 students and is led by Provost Gerald Francis.

As part of their charge, the task force has publically requested feedback from the Elon population to determine what reading and writing challenges the community most cares about and how Elon might address those issues. As the first part of this charge, they have requested short position papers (sometimes called white papers) from students that detail the one issue you think is exceptionally important for the Elon community to address and why this issue is important to Elon. Your issues should grow out of the themes we’ve already discussed in class and the government reports we will examine. Some of you had theme ideas in your project 1 drafts that might be appropriate here.

For this assignment you will conduct academic research on a reading and/or writing issue, perhaps the same issue from Project 1 or an offshoot you also find interesting, breaking down your large issue into some smaller chunk that you can work with in this paper. Based on this research you will argue that your issue is one the Elon community should address specifically. To accomplish this task you will need to research the issue in general from all aspects (although you may narrow you actual topic); carefully research this theme using credible academic sources and limited Web sources; and take a clear position on why this particular theme should be primary in Elon’s concern for students. Project 3, a group project, will build on the work you do on Project 2.

Your audience for your position paper is the President’s Task Force on Millennial Students Reading/Writing, led by Provost Francis. They have asked you to limit your semi-formal position papers to 5 pages plus a comprehensive Works Cited page. They have added in their call
for papers that they will only seriously consider position papers that take a **clear position about the importance of the issue to the Elon community** and that include careful and documented research on the issue.

**Project Goals and Strategies in Practice**
- Learn strategies for planning, conducting, evaluating, and synthesizing research from a variety of different types of sources as well as citing those sources ethically in MLA format
- Build on what you learned about synthesizing and evaluating arguments to encourage more sophisticated application to a different type of argument
- Assess your audience and rhetorical situation carefully in order to choose appropriate persuasive and rhetorical strategies (both textual and design-oriented) in your final paper
- Present an effective, research-based written argument in which you take and support a position

**Primary Tasks**
**The requested position paper to the Task Force 20pts (due 3.20 by 11:59 pm)** – Strong papers will have a cover page (not included in page count), use good heading structure, contain a few valuable graphics to help make your points, and include a separate Works Cited page in MLA format. You are expected to collect research from a variety of academic sources; you WILL have at least a 50-50 mix of library sources (which includes refereed database articles) and online sources, preferably more in favor of library sources. You will cite at least 5 different sources minimum, not including the two chapters we have read in class (which you can absolutely use, just no in your source count). Wikipedia, online encyclopedias and online dictionaries **DO NOT COUNT** as credible academic resources in this paper; Wikipedia is a good source for finding topical references but not for actual research info.

**Content should follow a logical line of argument, present a strong guiding thesis statement, introduce the audience to the issue well, carefully explain how the issue fits into Elon’s community, and wrap up with a strong recommendation, with all research cited using in-text citations in MLA format.**

Be sure to carefully consider the rhetorical situation and your purpose.

**Dear RPR Letter (due in same document as paper)**
Write a “Dear RPR” letter in which you explain your writing process (i.e. what stages/activities you did, how you wrote, what specific rhetorical choices you made about writer, audience, text, design) to ME specifically as your College Writing instructor, what you think you did well in the research paper (and why), and 2-3 specific areas of concern you have that you would especially like me to comment on when grading. The Dear RPR letter is NOT optional; you will lose up to 5 points for not turning one in or for turning in a shoddy last minute letter.

**Evaluation**
See grading rubric at the end of this document. We will use this document to self-assess your writing, in peer review, and as the final grading tool.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| -Disregards audience by ignoring guidelines set out initially by audience  
-Uses inappropriate tone  
-Does not establish a relationship with audience  
-Provides little to no key information the audience would care about  
-Does not draw reader into text by connecting at the introduction and conclusion, making clear transitions  
-Does not have a clear point or opinion | -Meets standards set by audience initially  
-Addresses audience adequately  
-Somewhat understands the tone but is inconsistent  
-Writing is mostly clear and mostly effective  
-Considers perspectives but does not expand on them | -Meets all standards set by audience initially and goes beyond them  
-Fully understands audience and creates relationship with audience throughout the text  
-Engages the readers into the writing  
-Exceptional presentation of tone/style  
-Writes effectively and convincingly to readers |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| -Fewer than 5 academic resources  
-Ignores MLA formatting, no in-text citations, poor Works Cited formatting, doesn’t integrate source material well  
-Research doesn’t support thesis directly  
 -Very few academic or credible resources, mostly from websites  
-Research not synthesized into argument | -Provides 5 required resources, most credible academic resources  
-Cites sources mostly correctly, few minor MLA formatting errors  
-Research is relevant and mostly supports argument  
-Uses in-text citations (mostly correct) and integrates source material well  
-Supporting research found but does not used in argument as well as it could be | -Research is relevant and completely supports argument  
-Provides more than 5 relevant and credible academic resources  
-Completely correct MLA formatting and in-text citations  
-Uses higher level academic research (journals, etc.) other than standard research sources |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation Support</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Generally unsupported, vague and disorganized  
 - Weak thesis or thesis takes side of issue rather than that Elon should care about the issue  
 -Topic unrelated to assignment  
 -Poorly articulated recommendation and support  
 -Poor explanation, if any, about how it relates to Elon | -Clear, supported and logical  
 -On topic- logical line of argument  
 -Explains the issue in way audience can follow  
 -Relates issue to the Elon community  
 -Support good but could be stronger in some places  
 -Argument could be articulated more clearly in some places | -Clear, supported and logical  
 -On topic- logical line of argument  
 -Well developed thesis followed by a detailed explanation of issue and how it relates to the Elon community  
 -Strong ties to support  
 -Support is very well articulated  
 -Relates to the Elon community |
### Conventions/Formatting
- Fewer than five credible sources
- Lack of source variety
- Sources improperly cited
- Improper report structure
- Title page is nonexistent or does not professionally reflect position of paper
- Graphics are poorly used or not included
- Paper lacks sufficient amount of content for audience’s needs
- 5 credible sources (half internet, half library sources)
- Resources cited (MLA format) internally and through works cited page with few errors
- Title page that reflects position of paper
- Graphics that support the issue or recommendation
- Paper does not exceed five pages
- Paper includes well over five credible sources (including internet and library sources)
- Sources cited correctly with no errors (both internally and Works Cited page)
- Title page clearly and effectively reflect paper position
- Excellent use of graphics that support the argument
- Paper does not exceed five pages

### Polishing
- Contains multiple errors that interfere with your meaning
- Contains some errors, but errors do not interfere with your meaning
- Contains few, if any errors

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### English 110: College Writing
Spring 2009

**Project 2: Theme Research Paper/Recommendation**

**READINGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>READINGS/WORK DUE TODAY</th>
<th>TOPICS TO BE COVERED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Th 2.26 | **P1 Final version due by Blackboard AND HARDCOPY Before Class**<sup>**</sup>  
- Check your paper before uploading to make sure it is the correct version + Dear RPR letter  
- Name your file P1Final_Lastname.doc  
- Use the Link through the Assignment tab/P1 folder; DO NOT use the Dropbox  
READ Studies in Blackboard  
“Readings”  
READ Project 2 Assignment Sheet | Project Preview essay revision workshop (bring electronic version and copy with my comments)  
Intro to research project (Project 2)  
Discuss reading/writing studies  
Developing possible topics and topic |
| T 3.3 | Read ch6 Ede through page 160 (skip section on Field Research)  
Research Topic email to RPR by end of class | Purpose of Research  
Research sources  
Source Credibility |
| Th 3.5 | Library Research | Meet in Lobby of Belk Library |
| T 3.10 | Read ch5 Ede through page 128  
Write your main claim; develop that into a thesis statement  
Write possible supporting claims for paper | Turning research into an argument  
Organizing argument |
| Th 3.12 | Read Ede ch6 pp160-168  
Writing workshop  
More MLA  
(Possibly will cover graphics as well) | Bring paper to work on and all needed research  
MIDTERM EXAM prep |
| T 3.17 | MIDTERM EXAM (45 minutes)  
Mini-conferences/Writing workshop | Mini-conferences/Writing workshop |
English 110: College Writing      Spring 2009
Project 3: Team Field Research Paper/ Presentation  25pts

By this stage in College Writing, you have had practice in several different types of arguments using different types of support. In terms of the course objectives, we have worked extensively with the writing process and rhetorical situations (understanding the relationship of purpose to audience). We have also touched briefly on all course goals listed in the syllabus. This project will meet each of those goals.

In Project 3, you will build on all that you have learned so far and add making an argument from primary data that you collect to your repertoire. You will also work with two or three other students with whom you have a similar interest and write your new research paper as a team.

Rhetorical Situation and Audience
Assume that the President’s Task Force on Millennial Students Reading/Writing at Elon received a high number of really strong position papers like the ones you wrote for Project 2 in College Writing. As the next step in the process, the Task Force has asked different classes of students to get involved more deeply by looking into the issue they saw as most important from the papers.

Our College Writing course was chosen because we were already taking about generational differences and because the Task Force felt that our class presented some of the best researched and most relevant papers. We have been tasked with researching our issues a bit further, collecting primary data from college students at Elon and other institutions, and creating a paper/presentation with at least one well conceived recommendation for how Elon can address the issue (or at least get the issue more attention on campus). To do so, we will break up into teams to research the different issues, report back to each other, and select the strongest argument to be presented to the Task Force.
Your audience for your paper and presentation will be your peers in College Writing, keeping in mind that if the class selects your project, you might be presenting to the Task Force as well (hypothetically).

**Primary Tasks**

**Team Research Plan** (2 points) – Each group will decide on a topic/research question for research as a group, preferably one that your existing research already supports so you do not have to do much additional library research. By 4.2, you and your group will develop a research plan. This short memo to me should contain the following sections:

- a brief overview of the topic you will focus on
- a discussion of the methods you will use to collect your primary data (choosing at least 2 of the following – direct observation, survey, focus group, interview set) and why you will use these methods
- a list of questions you will use (i.e. 10 survey, focus group, and/or interview questions)
- a brief discussion of your participant pool (who will you ask for data – Elon freshman in your classes? Your Facebook friends? Who will you not ask for data? Seniors?).

Your team written memo is due to me by the end of class time (12:10) on Thursday 4.2.

**Team Research Paper** (15 points) – Your group-written research report will look more like a research report you might do in a social sciences class than a simple research paper. Your paper will probably include the following sections:

- Introduction to the issue and its importance, short discussion of your research question and the layout of your paper
- Overview of the issue (short literature review covering the important points of your collective library research)
- Discussion of methods (how did you collect your data to answer the question?)
- Results of your research (what did you find through your research that was interesting and relevant to your question, that would be interesting to the students in class and to the Task Force?)
- Discussion/Recommendation – based on your results, what step do you think that Elon should take to address this issue on campus and why? (should we have a speaker? A book group? An open discussion? Etc.)

Your paper will be due at the start of class 4.23 (the class period after presentations).

**Team Presentation** (5 points) – Your group will put together a short presentation to the class based on your findings, arguing that your research shows this issue and your recommendation should be taken to the board. Each group will make a 7-10 minute presentation to the class on 4.21, accompanied by a mature PowerPoint presentation to support your discussion. You can’t cover your entire paper in your presentation so chose the information that will be the most valuable to making your argument for your recommendation. Presentations will be assessed on the argument presented, the strength of the discussion, and the appropriateness of the PPT and its use in your presentations.

**Presentation Evaluations** (possible 2 bonus points) – During each group presentation, audience members will complete a rubric that will be turned in to me at the end of the presentation. Based on these evaluations, I will type up a sheet of feedback for each group AND determine which of our group presentations will be presented to the Task Force. **The team chosen will earn 2 bonus**
points. Each student must turn in a completed rubric for each group (other than their own) to be eligible for their team to win the bonus.

**Individual Team Assessments** (3 points) – At the end of the project, after you turn in your papers, we will conduct an in-class team assessment. You will evaluate each of your team members and yourself based on contributions to the project, participation in the health of the group, and demonstrated learning. You’ll assign each a grade from 0-3 points; I’ll average those scores together for a team participation score for each of you as well as provide feedback to each for future group work.

**NO DEAR RPR LETTER** is required for this assignment because the smaller stages of the project will meet the same goals.

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**English 110: College Writing**

**Spring 2009**

Project 3: Team Field Research Paper/Presentations

**READINGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>READINGS/WORK DUE TODAY</th>
<th>TOPICS TO BE COVERED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 3.31</td>
<td>Read “Conducting Primary Research” from Purdue OWL (Link in BB readings), through Observation section Read Ede 154-157 on Primary Research</td>
<td>Discuss Project 3, assign groups Field Research Planning questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 4.2</td>
<td>Read RPR’s Guides to Observation and Interviewing (BB readings)</td>
<td>Deciding on a field research plan Writing Questions Exercise Group workshop to create Research Plan Plan <strong>due by end of class</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4.7</td>
<td>(Collect Data)</td>
<td>Collecting Data Writing in a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 4.9</td>
<td>(Collect Data)</td>
<td>Analyzing Data Data Graphics Group Dynamics exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4.14</td>
<td>Read the Four PPTs under the “Designing Effective PPTs” from the Purdue OWL (Link in BB Readings)</td>
<td>Giving Presentations Designing in PPT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 4.16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation/Paper workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4.21</td>
<td><strong>PRESENTATIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>PRESENTATIONS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 4.23</td>
<td>Read Assignment 4 Pick layout Pick editing teams Distribute papers for editing</td>
<td><strong>Final Project 3 Paper Due</strong> <strong>TEAM ASSESSMENT (IN CLASS)</strong> Book project Editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4.28</td>
<td><strong>SURF</strong> No Class</td>
<td>Attend a SURF Presentation!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Materials Prepared by Jessie Moore, ENG 110 Coordinator
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Th 4.30</td>
<td>Book editing Return edited work to writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editing Revising Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 5.5</td>
<td>Drafting Introductions to Sections Drafting Introduction to the Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 5.7</td>
<td>Designing the Cover Continued Proofreading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 5.12</td>
<td>Last day to revise papers in book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Book finalized for printing Discuss Final Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Thursday, 5.14, 8-11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**English 110: College Writing**  
**Spring 2009**

**Project 4: BOOK with team introduction, paper revision 15 points**

For this final project, we will form special editorial teams as well as functional groups (layout, art, final editing, etc.) in order to put your papers together into a cohesive group. Your autobiographies and group papers will definitely go in the book, and you can choose which of the other two projects you would like to submit for inclusion. You can expect to do additional self-editing as well as make editorial changes on others’ papers in order to help our collection the strongest it can be for our readers. We’ll

- Comprehensively revise and edit papers for the collection  
- write a collection introduction to the text  
- write intros to each section including intros to your individual papers and how they fit with the section  
- decide on book conventions to be included  
- lay out the book  
- design cover art and inside art  
- publish the book through lulu.com.

Since this project was awarded a $1000 grant from Elon’s Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, I will be able to provide food and help from upperclassmen for work sessions and purchase a copy for each of you at the end of the semester.

**Course Objectives Served**

As discussed in the syllabus, all sections of College Writing share the same major objectives, all of which this project helps to meet.

“In this course, you will strive to develop

- A more sophisticated writing process including invention, peer responding, revising and editing that results in a clear, effective, well-edited public piece.
- A more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between purpose, audience and voice, and an awareness that writing expectations and conventions vary within the academy and in professional and public discourse.
- An appreciation for the capacity of writing to change oneself and the world.”
This book project is designed to be a culmination of all the skills, activities, writing, and revising practice you have had so far this semester as well as to be a way to allow your course writing to endure for a new group of readers. You will draw on rhetorical strategies that touch all of these objectives to create your final book, which I will use in future College Writing sections as a reader and a tool to help those students develop their own skills.

**Rhetorical Situation/Audience**
The rhetorical situation is exactly as it appears here. I’m not contriving one for you. You are students in a required College Writing course who have been reading, talking, researching, and writing about generational differences/reading and writing issues all semester. Your projects all have a similar theme which makes them perfect for a united collection that other students can benefit from.

The audience for your book is you—other students taking a required College Writing course here at Elon. They expect the book to look and feel like a book, be organized like a book familiarly, and to provide them with a variety of different papers to read on a topic.

**Primary Tasks**
The primary task of this project is to complete the book, but in order to do so I’ve broken down several other tasks to make that idea more manageable.

1. **Book Outline/Style Guide** – In class on Thursday 4.23, we will work in groups to recommend the pages/sections/organization of the book as well as the style guide (text font, heading font, way titles and names will be formatted, etc.). Once individual pods have come up with their suggestions, we will discuss, combine ideas as necessary, and finalize a document by the end of class. I’ll then take that to make a template for your groups to work with during the layout phase.

2. **Team Section Editing 6 pts** – In your project 3 teams, you will be responsible for editing/polishing each other’s papers and the group paper for inclusion in the book. You will each do a comprehensive revision of either project 1 or 2 for inclusion in the book. You’ll turn in the revised paper and a detailed discussion of your revisions (especially how you addressed my comments and your peer’s suggestions – just like we discussed I’ll have to do when I turn my journal article back in). You can also make an argument for a revised grade if you so choose. For this section, you can earn 2 pts for team assessed participation in the editing and compiling process (I’ll provide a form for assessment) and 4 Points for individual revision and the revision memo.

3. **Team Introduction Writing 2pts** – In your project 3 teams, you will write a comprehensive introduction to your section of the book. Your introduction should include information about each of your papers, the process of writing the papers, and how that process led you to the topic, rhetorical decisions, and final version of your group project.

4. **(Part of Final Exam) BOOK 7 pts** – Finishing the book itself will be a major accomplishment! I think it’s only fair that you all get to assign your own grade for the book. One of the questions on the final exam will ask you to write a final personal reflection on the process/product following a prompt. You’ll discuss the audience, rhetorical, and writing strategies you used, and will assign a grade to the final book project. I’ll take the class assigned grades completed during the Final Exam, average them together, and assign everyone a grade of up to 7 points here.
Imitation

“It is from authors worthy of our study that we must draw our stock of words, the variety of our figures and our methods of composition, while we must form our minds on the model of every excellence. There can be no doubt that in art no small portion of our task lies in imitation. [...] And it is a universal rule of life that we should wish to copy what we approve in others.”

- Quintilian

One of the oldest methods of teaching rhetoric has been the imitation. In classical times, teachers would prompt students to study speeches by the masters of oratory and then replicate them using different subject matter. Imitation involves the careful study of a model text, one you analyze in depth, paying close attention to every sentence, word by word. You look at vocabulary, figures of speech, and at the rhythm and arrangement of words. Then you analyze whole sentences and paragraphs and study the logical progression of thought and content. Such exercises were meant to help students develop their oratorical abilities through “hands-on” practice instead of rote instruction. That is, imitation as a pedagogical tool stressed the value of showing rather than telling students what successful compositions entail.

So for this assignment, select a piece of argumentative writing that you believe is persuasive and write an imitation of it, substituting different subject matter. In your imitation, strive to reproduce the feel of the authors writing—his or her way with language. You will need to think about the rhetorical concepts we’ve discussed in class and use these to help you identify the successful features of your text.

At first this assignment might seem overwhelming because how are you supposed to know what to imitate and what you want to say in your imitation? But there are actually several inventive approaches you can take:

- Perhaps there is a current event/issue or controversy about which you have strong feelings. In this case, you could find a well-written editorial from a newspaper or magazine and imitate its rhetorical structure while substituting your own thoughts about a specific topic.
- If you are interested in satire and ironic texts, select a political speech or a well-know essay or address to ironically mimic. For example, the “State of Union” address has become a genre unto itself—it is meant to inspire and bolster American resolve—but you could imitate such an address while pointing out America’s flaws and shortcomings. Or more satirically, you could take a famous speech from history and adapt into a speech about something subtle or run-of-the-mill.
- You can take a journalistic or memoir approach. Find a piece of journalistic writing or something more memoir based that reports or reflects on an experience of some kind, and use that to report or reflect on an experience of your own.

In addition to your imitation, you need to turn in a 2-page rhetorical analysis of the piece of writing you are imitating. These should not be summaries but instead a general explanation of how the writer constructs his/her text. In these you also need to clearly articulate what rhetorical features of the text you plan to transfer into your imitation and why. Even though you should base this supplementary analysis on the informal writing and discussion you’ve done in class, you can think of this analysis as an introduction to your imitation.

The key to effective imitation is that you identify and isolate the rhetorical features of a text that you believe make it persuasive, convincing, and/or enjoyable to read. That is, it’s not practical to attempt a close imitation of every feature within the text, so you will have to decide which ones are most important, and in addition you must be willing to improvise and revise your imitation as your writing progresses.
Directions:
- Aim for your imitation to be between 4-5 double-spaced pages. Depending on what your imitating your final product might be a little shorter or a little longer, but as it goes with everything in this course, the final page length should reflect your writing’s effectiveness.
- Please attach a sample of your original text on which you have clearly marked what sections/parts you are imitating. (You do not have to do a close imitation of an entire text, so you might choose to imitate certain parts, rearranging them and/or filling in your imitation with your own choice of structure).
- Include your 2-page introductory rhetorical analysis at the beginning. These can be two separate documents that are paper-clipped, or you can print both the analysis and the imitation on the same document.
- Make sure everything is stapled.
ENG 110U
Project Two: Current Events Op-Ed

This project will address the following skill sets: writing process, focusing purpose and audience, argumentation, research strategies, and source evaluation.

For your second project, you will choose a current event to be the basis for your work. You will write an informative literature review that discusses this topic and write an Op-Ed for a specific magazine. Please choose a topic that interests you and that you feel passionate about, or you and I will both be bored. Your topic must be covered in the news, and it must be happening now.

Components

1) Magazine audience analysis-- Choose a magazine for which you will write an Op-Ed piece. Write a short analysis of this magazine’s audience. Make sure to consider the audience’s demographics, tastes, expectations, and the advertisements within the magazine. Length: 1 page.

2) Literature Review-- Using the following types of sources, find at least five articles that relate to your topic:
   - Two websites – Your choice.
   - Three print news articles – CQ Researcher and LexisNexis are most useful.

Write a literature review that discusses how this topic is currently being handled by the media. Your primary objective is to give your reader a well-rounded understanding of this topic. Quote from your sources to back up your points, and make sure to account for various perspectives of this topic. Length: 2-3 pages.

3) Works Cited: As with all research, all of these sources must be properly listed in a Works Cited page.

4) Op-Ed: Write an Op-Ed that discusses your views on this topic. Remember that this assignment is not a rant but an attempt to persuade your magazine’s audience, so you should strengthen your emotional appeals with logic and credibility. Be sure to consider your audience and what persona you want to present through your argument. Though you may use examples and research, you do not need to cite sources within your Op-Ed. Length: 2 pages.

Due Dates
Tuesday, 3/17 – Bring sources to class and turn in Source Evaluation via Blackboard.
Thursday, 3/19 - Bring completed first draft to class for Peer Review.
Friday, 3/20 - Upload final draft through Blackboard Assignment link by 12:00 p.m. (noon).

Logistics Checklist
- Double-space type, 12-point Times New Roman font with one-inch margins.
- Document research in MLA format.
- Turn in only one document in .RTF format.
- Name the file yourlastname_Oped.rtf (ex. Hlavaty_Oped.rtf).
Project 2: Op-Ed Rubric

Magazine Audience Analysis (2 points)
Audience is thoroughly defined /1
Op-Ed fits magazine’s audience /1
Total: / 2

Literature Review (6 points)
Thoroughly informs the reader about both sides of the issue /2
Explains the significance of research (analysis) /2
Integrates quotes with own words /1
Correctly cites sources and formats Works Cited page /1
Total: / 6

Op-Ed (4 points)
Clearly argues one side /2
Effectively uses appeals and persuades audience /2
Total: / 4

Overall (3 point)
Well-organized points with clear flow /1
Contains no grammatical or spelling errors /1
Contributes original argument and thought /1
Total: / 3

Overall Total: / 15

ENG 110 Magazine Audience Analysis

Write an in-depth analysis of your chosen magazine and its audience. Your response should consider the following things:

What types of ads are present? (Give examples.)
What types of articles are most common?
What types of articles will not be printed?
Look at some of the authors. What are their credentials?
Does this magazine print editorials or opinionated articles? If so, what types?

Put it together: Who is this magazine’s target audience? (Be specific about its demographics.)
Finally, what is your Op-Ed topic and will it fit this magazine? Why or why not?

Expected length: 1 page.
English 110 Invention Strategies

One of the things I’ve been working more with this term is invention strategies. In part this grows out of my own frustration with students asking me to give them topics or generating only the most predictable topics, and in part it is an element of a larger study Michelle Trim and I are doing on invention in the writing process.

As you’ll see when you read through these two sets of questions, there is nothing particularly flashy or new about them. I use the first list of questions with my rhetorical analysis assignment. I give students the set of questions in class before they’ve seen the assignment, and we spend the better part of a period working with them. The students answer them independently; I put abbreviated versions of the questions on the board; the students walk around listing their answers to a half dozen or so of them in columns on the board. We talk for awhile about what people’s interests are. We spend some more time on #16 (i.e. a list of the student’s own questions). Then, I give them the assignment. Along with Michelle Trim, I’ve gathered data from my classes strongly suggesting that students find this open-ended thinking—before they even have the assignment—very helpful in generating ideas for their paper.

For their next paper—an essay to be submitted to Newsweek’s “My Turn” column, we do something similar. This time, however, students know what to expect and why we are spending a whole class talking about ideas and interests.

The primary difference between the two sets of questions is that one of them prods students to think about topics that appeal to them but about which they are not experts—topics that are good for research (the first part of my rhetorical analysis assignment). The second set asks students to think about issues and experiences that are meaningful and important to them—ones they can write a public but personal piece about (as the Newsweek venue demands).

I tinker with these questions every time I use them—tossing out ones that fell flat last time and adding ones that seem (to me at least) worth answering.

The other useful element of these strategies is that they are good for developing classroom camaraderie, which I can the capitalize on later in the writing process when students need to be honest with but supportive of each other during peer revision.

--Megan Isaac
Apparently Random Set of Questions

1. Name a craft you’d like to learn (anything from shoeing horses to making cheese to keeping bees to building sailboats—a hands on skill).
2. Name a country you would like to visit.
3. Name a disease you’d like to learn more about.
4. Name a problem you’d like to solve (not something too big like World Hunger but kids arriving at U.S. public schools without eating breakfast due to poverty.)
5. Name a sport or game you’ve rarely or never played but would like to try.
6. Name three inventions you think are interesting (could be newish ones like iPods or older ones like shoe laces).
7. Name something in the U.S. education system needs that you are interested in seeing improved—be specific.
8. Name an historical event you’d like to learn more about (it could be the medieval plague or the attack on Pearl Harbor).
9. Name a law that you’d like to see changed (something about immigration, about speed limits, about environmental regulations or lack of them)
10. Name something you’d like to see taken off the market (tasers, plastic shopping bags?)
11. Name two complicated events or problems—something you agree has more than one side (could be current or historical, national or local).
12. Name an element of any religion that interests you but that you don’t know much about (could be a theological belief, a practice, a celebration).
13. Name an instrument you’d like to learn to play or a style of music you’d like to learn more about.
14. Name a field of study you think should be included in every student’s general education (but wasn’t well covered in your own education thus far).
15. Name something that needs more regulation.
16. Write an open ended question like the fifteen previous ones for everyone in the class to answer.
INVENTION EXERCISE
1. What is the best or most beloved gift you received before age 15?

2. If your home were on fire and you had time to carry 3 non-living items out the door with you, what would they be?
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

3. Name a person who has unexpectedly been an important influence on you (not a family member).

4. What have you learned the hard way?

5. What’s the best out-of-school learning experience you’ve had?

6. What have you lost that you wish you could get back?

7. What have you found?

8. What is something that the world or the U.S. needs to change—and that you could provide some leadership toward that change?

9. What is your pet peeve?

10. What good advice have you been given?

11. What have you overcome or what do you continue to struggle to overcome?

12. What should we celebrate?

13. Write your own question to provoke ideas for writing topics.
The “odd object” essay takes a small object—or a part of an object—and uses it to make a larger point. Sometimes the object serves as a metaphor for a bigger idea by representing something beyond its literal meaning. Sometimes, the object simply helps us understand the larger or wider context in which the object exists. Anytime you conduct analysis and then write about the results of that analysis, you are writing an odd object essay. The point is to look closely at your subject, breaking it apart in order to understand how the small pieces work, and then putting it all back together again in order to understand the whole. At various times, I’ve compared analysis of this kind to unraveling a sweater (picking at a thread to see where it leads) or to working a jigsaw puzzle (examining each puzzle piece to determine where it fits into the bigger puzzle).

For this essay, choose one of the following analytical topics:

- Conduct a literary analysis of a text we’ve read this semester. Identify an argument the text seems to be making and figure out what aspects of the text (diction, or words; symbols; metaphors; or other details) support this argument. You can do this in two ways:
  - Select an idea or image to follow through the text, observing how it changes, or
  - Select a short passage (1-2 paragraphs) from the text—one that seems particularly significant—and look at all of the elements included in the passage in order to figure out how the entire passage represents the argument contained in the entire text.
- Choose an object to analyze and present as a metaphor—as representative of some larger issue or importance. Some ideas: a taboo word, a person, a Facebook profile, some object that has personal importance to you or someone you know. Define and describe the object, then determine what that object represents. **This topic may have a less straightforward thesis, so don’t be alarmed!**
- Conduct a visual analysis of an image, either one we looked at as a class or one of your choosing, in order to determine the visual’s argument and how it makes that argument.
- Create your own visual argument. Present the argument, plus a written piece that explains what the argument is, how the visual elements work to support the argument, and why you chose to create this argument.
- Anything else? If you have an idea that’s not covered here, tell me about it.

Conduct a thorough analysis of your object and then write about it. Before you draft, analyze the rhetorical situation: What’s your purpose: to inform, to persuade, to explore, to explain—and why? Who’s your audience: Who needs to know or would want to know what your analysis uncovered—and why?

Once you’ve determined your purpose and audience, draft the essay. Your thesis will be your statement of what argument the object is making (or, depending on the topic, the importance of the object). Your support will be the evidence you uncovered or explored as you conducted your analysis. The “So what?” aspect of the conclusion will be how the specific object fits into a category or a more general context. Your introduction should include some background about the object or about the issue/idea you are exploring through analysis of your object (again, situating the
object in a broader context). If you can, include the visual or the passage from the text in your essay, somewhere in the introduction.

Tips and Suggestions:

- Make sure the “object” you select to analyze is worth analyzing—that it has some significant potential meaning. You want to be able to dig deeply into your subject. Some visual arguments—particularly advertisements—are so obvious that there’s not much to say about them.
- Make sure you care about the object. Choose as your subject something you feel strongly about, whether you find it fascinating or irritating or intimidating or satisfying.
- Be creative. Don’t be afraid to over-analyze or read too much into your object. Don’t be afraid to have questions as you analyze (as long as you attempt to answer them along the way). Sometimes the best analysis comes when you risk being wrong.
- If you do research to aid in your analysis, include a list of Works Cited as the last page of your essay.

Related course objectives and experiences:

- A more sophisticated writing process—including invention, peer responding, revising, and editing—that results in a clear, effective, well-edited public piece.
- Writing to persuade by analyzing, interpreting, researching, synthesizing, and evaluating a wide variety of sources.
- Writing to academic audiences, writing to non-academic audiences, and writing for one’s own purposes.

Grading

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<th>Does Not Meet Assignment Requirements</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Above Average</th>
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<td>Argument</td>
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<td>(Catches reader’s attention)</td>
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<td>Conclusion</td>
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Project 4

Cultural Studies Textual Analysis

Focus and Scope
The focus of this unit is on issues of interpretation and evaluation, processes at the heart of humanistic inquiry. For this project you will identify a cultural trend or phenomenon, explicate (using research) the origin and/or significance of this trend or phenomenon, and do a close reading of an artistic text or medium that evaluates how this text or medium reflects the cultural trend or phenomenon.

As you begin to consider your topic, you may focus on an individual text – for example, a particular poem, film, or political document – that provides a depiction of the trend or phenomenon. Or you can choose an artistic medium or genre as your focus of study: graffiti, TV crime dramas or reality shows, marketing campaigns, political campaigns. In this case you should employ no more than three texts that are closely related thematically. Another way to consider your topic would be to think about a particular trend or phenomenon that interests you. Previous students have explored cultural topics ranging from our culture’s obsession with diet or fitness, to the UFC and its implications, to sensationalism and the news media, among others. The primary criterion is that the cultural trend or phenomenon must have generated some discussion in academic journals and it must relate to current issues (2000-2008).

Purpose and Audience
Your goal is to articulate the connection that the trend or phenomenon has with these texts (and vice versa) and to explore the discussions of origin and/or significance that scholars have raised. The assignment is designed to help you (1) explore the nature of interpretation by examining how texts are cultural symbols, (2) apply your understanding of written argument to an analysis of arguments based on personal and cultural values rather than data, and (3) continue to familiarize yourself with research methods and conventional ways of citing and describing the work of other authors. Project 4 supports the English 110 course objectives by (1) utilizing a process model of writing as you brainstorm your topic and texts, locate useful academic research, generate connections between the cultural phenomenon, texts, and scholarly research materials, and as you revise, edit, and format subsequent drafts through workshop activities (2) Your paper should be written for an audience of fellow students who may recognize the artistic text(s) or cultural trend you are studying but who are not necessarily familiar with the critical discussion surrounding those issues. Your aim is to introduce these novice academics to the significance and/or origin of the cultural phenomenon or trend and to interpretive issues raised by the text(s). (3) This project will allow you to inform your expertise on a particular aspect of culture with credible, academic research and to explore the relationships between text and culture. Additionally, you will get the opportunity to present your findings and analysis to the class in our Research Symposia, which will be conducted during the final meetings of the semester.
Sample Topic

Essentially, you are writing an essay that shows how a text (or two or three) exemplifies an aspect of our culture, and you will be addressing the origin, importance, or implications of this aspect of our culture. For example, you might discuss how the MTV show “Two-a-Days” and the extremely high ratings and the particular features of “Monday Night Football” implicate a culture obsessed with a violent sport. Ultimately, what does such an obsession show about our culture? In this discussion, you might choose to interpret aspects of the texts that show the type of violence or symbolic militarism that our culture seems to enjoy. Also, whenever possible, you would need to rely on your journal articles to corroborate your textual observations and to help you draw out the broader implications. The essay that results from these connections would not only illuminate an aspect of our culture through the lens of texts, but it would also be credible as a result of the support from experts.

Technical Matters

- Length: 5-6 pages
- Sources: One – four textual sources. At least three academic/scholarly sources, drawn from a search of pertinent academic databases or the library catalog.
- Grading weight: 20%
- Documentation: Because this paper focuses on issues in the domain of the humanities, the MLA documentation form is most appropriate. List your sources in a works cited page, along with any other texts you cite in your discussion. See the Thompson handbook for documentation guidelines governing the type of text you have chosen.

Review Criteria for PROJECT 4
Cultural Studies Textual Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction (25 pts.)</th>
<th>What’s working well?</th>
<th>What deficiencies exist?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Provides a general introduction to the cultural issue or phenomenon and artistic text or genre that is to be the subject of interpretation.</td>
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<td>Introduces how the text(s) relate to culture.</td>
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<td>Includes a thesis statement that prepares the reader for the main points of the essay and summarizes the purpose and/or conclusion of the analysis. This statement should characterize the relationship between the text(s) and the cultural phenomenon.</td>
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Analysis (the body of the paper) (30 pts.)
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<tr>
<th>Explores the origin and/or significance of the cultural trend/phenomenon. Provides a close reading of the text(s) that reveals how aspects or parts of the text symbolize, exemplify, and/or relate to cultural trend/phenomenon.</th>
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<td>Organizes the discussion with topically distinct paragraphs.</td>
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<td>Uses specific examples from academic sources (brief summaries, paraphrases, direct quotes) to illustrate conclusions.</td>
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<td><strong>Conclusion (15pts.)</strong></td>
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<td>Summarizes main points of the essay. Reflects more generally on the issue of interpretation: What can be learned about culture by studying its texts?</td>
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**Content and Organization Assessment (70 points possible):**

**Grammar and Punctuation (grammar and mechanics have been carefully reviewed and edited) (20 points possible):**

- 0 (many sentence level errors – about one per sentence on average)
- 5 (sentence level errors of several varieties (punctuation, word choice, etc.) committed very frequently (several per paragraph))
- 10 (sentence level errors of several varieties (punctuation, word choice, etc.) committed infrequently or few sentence level errors committed frequently)
- 15 (few sentence level errors of a particular variety committed (comma splice errors, for instance))
- 20 (no errors noted)

**Assessment and Commentary:**

**MLA Citation Formatting (evidence is well documented, following MLA format for in-text citations and Works Cited page) (10 points possible):**

- 0 (no in-text citations or bibliography included)
- 5 (major formatting errors in-text or in the bibliography)
- 10 (no MLA formatting errors committed)

**Assessment and Commentary:**

**Overall Project 4 grade:**
**Description:** The following activities occur on the day that students are presented with the Project 4 Cultural Studies Text Analysis Essay prompt and rubric.

**Goals:** Students typically struggle, at first, with successfully identifying cultural trends and phenomena that are researchable and relatable to particular texts or genres. They also struggle with, or resist, interpreting texts as symbols of a cultural trend or phenomenon. These activities are designed to be a warm up to the kind of analysis they will be expected to perform in the essay.

*Introduction to Project 4 Prompt.*

*Interpretive “Fun” with a sample (YouTube) text.

-We’ll watch this clip twice…
  -Burger King “Manthem”

-After the viewing, address the following questions in writing:

  1. What cultural phenomenon or trend is the clip addressing?
  2. What kind of statement on the phenomenon is the clip making? In other words, does the clip condemn or support some part of our culture? Explain how you know this by identifying some aspect of the clip.
  3. What particular aspects of this clip support your interpretation?

-Class discussion of responses.

*Brainstorming texts that symbolize a cultural phenomenon or trend.*

-Consider our culture’s attention on diet. With a partner, narrow this trend down to a particular aspect, such as fad diets, use of supplements, endorsements of bad eating habits, etc.

-With your partner, find a cultural text (ad, magazine article, internet clip, etc.) that “shows” this aspect. Explain, in a collaborative piece, how this text depicts the trend. Is it a positive or negative depiction? Why? What implications does the depiction have?

-Class discussion of responses

*A few words concerning topic selection.*

-Remember, you may select any text or texts that are addressing a particular, identifiable cultural trend or phenomenon. This phenomenon must be researchable; you have to use at least three academic sources that will help you to support your statements on the implications and importance of the cultural phenomenon/trend, and these sources may also discuss your texts
according to how you want to address their cultural implications (this is sometimes the best case scenario with your sources).

**The Next Step(s):** After students write a topic prospectus that outlines their cultural trend/phenomenon and their text selection(s), we begin to address how research support will be critical to supporting their conclusions on the origin and/or significance of their cultural trend and, possibly, the relationship of the text to the phenomenon/trend. We discuss where research support is most critical in this kind of essay, using sample essays, and I often use class time for individual database searching and catalog searching to be sure that students will have success finding sources for their topics. Additionally, before they begin drafting the essay, conferences are very useful to be sure that students have selected a focused cultural trend/phenomenon, a set of relevant texts, have acquired useful academic sources, and have composed a tentative thesis. I ask students to bring each of these items to a conference before drafting begins.