Introduction for Faculty Colleagues

About the Course
I created a Structured Reading Journal to be used in Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (ANT 112). This course is comprised mostly of first-year students, many of whom have not yet declared a major and are unfamiliar with anthropology.

How the Assignment Fits Into the Course
Students use this journal when they read articles and book chapters that supplement the textbook (11 in total over the course of the semester). I provide a completed example journal that includes sample answers and advice for each section prior to completion of the first assignment. The first journal students submit is for practice. Five are awarded points for completion. Five are graded. Students also complete a reading journal for the source they read for their research project.

Aims for the Assignment
The aims for this assignment are to foster the development of the skills necessary for reading in any discipline while also introducing them to anthropological form and content. In this way, they develop general skills but also become oriented to cultural anthropology.

Important Features of the Assignment
The first eight questions in the journal ask the students to complete tasks such as give the proper citation, Google the author, locate the thesis statement and evidence that supports the thesis, and explain what the authors say in specific sections of the article. These tasks help the students contextualize the author, break down the components of the article, and digest the argument the author makes. These questions are the same for each reading. The repetition encourages the students to read systematically. It also gives them a sense of the variety of ways in which anthropologists write.

Question #9 is a short essay-type question geared toward specific readings (in the example provided below, I refer to Kauanui’s article on blood quantum in Hawai`i).
This question encourages students to link themes from articles to concepts in the textbook. In addition, it prepares students for the short essay questions on the midterm and final exams because the final questions on the worksheets are similar to the essay components of the exams.

**Changes Made to the Assignment**
This assignment was revised at the Writing Excellence Summer Institute. First, I shifted from a generalized *worksheet* that the students completed for a few key assignments to a *reading journal* that is tailored to each of the eleven readings that the students will complete. The shift in terminology was made to encourage students to view the assignment as a chance to develop their thoughts about the articles in writing, rather than a “homework assignment” they “fill in.” Second, the rationale behind increasing the number of times they complete the assignment is to train them to read systematically. Third, I tailored the assignment to each reading to provide some variation, to give the students the chance to write about questions similar to questions posed on the exams (which was done verbally in the past), as well as to couch the essay component in terms of real-world scenarios. For example, students may be asked to summarize an article, link the contents of an article to the components/characteristics of culture, or to act as a “cultural broker” and explain some aspect of an article to an outside party. In addition to improving students’ reading and writing skills, completing the assignment should improve classroom discussions because completion of the journal requires preparation.
The Assignment I Distribute to Students

ANT 112 – Intro to Anthropology
Journal Entries

Assignment
11 Reading Journal Entries
  1 – For practice (your paper is scored, but the score is not recorded)
  5 – Fully graded according to the rubric (10 points each, 50 points total)
  5 – Scored for completion (5 points each, 25 points total)

Connection to course goals and the Elon Writing Excellence Initiative
This assignment requires you to read the non-textbook articles/book chapters in an engaged, systematic way. It addresses the following course goals (listed on the syllabus):

  1. Learn how to think like an anthropologist by reading anthropology articles and writing about them.
  2. Learn how to write about contemporary issues in terms of culture
  3. Learn how to apply additional anthropological concepts introduced in the textbook to non-textbook sources in writing

**These address the “writing to learn” component of the Elon Writing in Excellence Initiative

Learning objectives and rationale
The main objective of the Reading Journal Entries, to be completed for the 10 non-textbook readings marked with an asterisk (*) in the syllabus, is to help you develop the skills necessary to read academic articles in most disciplines with proficiency.
This active engagement with the readings will help you understand the argument each author is trying to make, as well as the writing structures anthropologists use. The entries will prepare you to participate in classroom discussion about the text. The entries will prepare you for the essay portions of the midterm and final exams.
**Directions**

1. Download the article from Moodle and PRINT IT OUT.
2. Complete questions 1-2 using the article/chapter, Google, and World Cat (www.worldcat.org).
3. With the journal questions up on your computer screen, read the print copy of the article.
4. Make notes ON THE PRINT COPY as you read.
5. Type your responses to questions 3-8 as you read. USE FULL SENTENCES.
6. GO BACK AND LOOK OVER YOUR NOTES on the printed article and in the journal.
7. Formulate your answer to question 9.
8. Check for errors. (I recommend you ask a friend/classmate to read it and give you feedback.)
9. Print your journal, staple it to the article, and bring it to class. Take notes in the margins of the journal entry as necessary.
10. Submit the journal-article packet to the instructor at the end of class.

**Grading Criteria**

1. Level of engagement (Qs #1-8): did you answer every question in a manner similar to the example provided on Moodle? (4 pts)
2. Appropriate reference to the textbook (Q #9): Did you link the reading to key concepts in Haviland (culture, and/or terms from the corresponding Haviland chapter) in a way that demonstrates your understanding of the reading and the concepts from the textbook? (4 pts)
3. Quality of the writing (ALL qs): Is your writing clear and concise? Is it free from errors in grammar, syntax, diction, and spelling? (2 pts)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Your Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of engagement (Q 1-8) (4 points total)</td>
<td>Questions left blank, incorrect information on multiple questions, or failure to cite properly (0-1)</td>
<td>Questions are all answered, but multiple questions include incorrect information or faulty citation (2)</td>
<td>Questions are all answered but one answer contains incorrect information or a faulty citation (3)</td>
<td>Questions are all answered well (no errors) (4)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reference to terms/concepts (Q 9) (4 points total)</td>
<td>Answer refers to textbook term, but misapplies it (0-1)</td>
<td>Answer applies a textbook term correctly, but the reference lacks relevance (2)</td>
<td>Answer applies a relevant term correctly, but in a somewhat unclear manner (3)</td>
<td>Answer applies a relevant term clearly and with precision (4)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of writing (all Qs) (2 points total)</td>
<td>Answers are incomprehensible or not written in full sentences (0)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Answers may be unclear in places or include a few errors in grammar and spelling (1)</td>
<td>Answers are clear and concise, and free from errors in grammar and spelling (2)</td>
<td></td>
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**Total**
DIRECTIONS: Use this worksheet to help you engage with the article/book chapters we will read each week. While reading, answer the questions below. TYPE your answers in full sentences, PRINT it, and BRING it to class. Take notes during class discussion and submit this paper at the end of class.

1. Give the full citation for this article/book chapter. Use APA style.

2. Who is the author? Google them and find out where s/he works, what kind of research s/he does, and what her/his basic background is.

3. Find the author’s research question or thesis statement. Write it below, using quotation marks and give a page number. (Ex: “In this paper I argue that…” (34).)

4. List the subsection titles in this article. After each title, write ONE SENTENCE about what the author SAYS in the section, and ONE SENTENCE about what the section DOES (how does that placement of that information advance the argument?).

5. Find two pieces of evidence in the article/chapter that support the author’s argument and list them below. Again, use quotation marks and page numbers.

6. What conclusions does the author draw? Don’t forget the quotation marks and page numbers.

7. What sections of the article are unclear to you? List the page numbers.

8. Find at least 2 new words or other researchers referenced by the author. Write a one sentence definition of each word (or introduction in the case of another researcher).

9. You are acting as a “cultural broker” – someone who works as a consultant to explain the cultural practices of one group of people to another. A) Explain
the relationship between identity and Hawaiian genealogy to a Federal official in charge of indigenous land rights, and explain the uses of blood quantum in terms of land rights to a Hawaii resident (who may or may not be of Hawaiian ancestry). B) Explain what blood quantum and Hawaiian genealogy have in common and what is different about them. Your answer should be 250 -300 words.

Word count: ________