Instructor’s Resource Manual

to accompany

Trimbur

The Call to Write
Second Edition

and

The Call To Write
Brief Second Edition

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Foreword

The Instructor’s Manual to this, the second edition of *The Call to Write*, offers practical guidance from experienced teachers who have used the text. Instructors might think of this manual as a kind of primer on the teaching of composition, one that pays special attention to genre and to the conception of writing as social action. Each of the chapters in this manual attends to a specific aspect of composition studies, and offers an extensive bibliography on each topic. As well, the chapters offer a wealth of classroom activities specific to this text. An instructor new to *The Call to Write* will find ample discussion of building a course around the text. An experienced instructor will find ideas and prompts for refreshing her approach.

To write effectively is to understand fully the rhetorical burdens of a discourse situation. To produce a credible piece of writing is to be able to demonstrate rhetorical awareness, both of situation and of conventions. Practically, this means that when we teach composition, we ought to plan for our students to do far more than merely demonstrate their ability to accomplish discrete assignments. Capable teachers of writing will design instructional situations where students can reliably develop and practice this knowledge. The activities and projects in which we ask students to engage can--and should--very profitably extend beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

As the Outcomes Statement for First Year Composition, published by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, suggests, in order for students to participate in public discourse, they must develop a reasonable understanding of the ways that genres shape social awareness. The WPA statement reflects a current awareness of how students might be able to demonstrate that they’re able to produce credible pieces of writing. As students negotiate the particular rhetorical demands and problems that genres pose, they can more fully attempt to take part in already ongoing social conversations. The WPA Statement demands a great deal from first-year composition. It asks that we help students develop a more sophisticated idea of rhetoric, where the conventions surrounding certain genres both enable and constrain our textual performances. It demands that we shape assignments that invite students to explore the role of
language and writing in their lives. We invite you to link to the WPA site, and to read the statement in full (http://www.cas.ilstu.edu/English/Hesse/outcomes.html).

The companion website to *The Call to Write* is another valuable resource for both new and experienced teachers. It also has an extensive section oriented to students, who will find web resources and exercises designed for each chapter, as well as updated “In the News” links that will be valuable as they seek topics for research and writing. Instructors will find web resources attuned to their interests, and practical guides for teaching visual rhetoric and online communication. Teachers will also find in the student exercises ideas for enhancing their instruction of writing and reading in digital environments.
CHAPTER 1

Teaching the Genres of Writing

[A] genre [is] an identifiable kind or species of language that cannot be understood in and of itself but as it exists in social and historical situations.

David Bleich, "Genders of Writing"

THINKING ABOUT GENRES

For many years, composition textbooks have described writing as an ability and writing instruction as a way of enhancing that ability. Or they have described writing as a skill and writing instruction as a way of teaching that craft. Part 1 of The Call to Write takes the skill-based approach, offering chapters designed to develop students' critical reading and writing skills.

To these traditional approaches The Call to Write adds a new perspective: writing is a social action, and writing instruction is a way of helping writers figure out how to take part in that social action. Toward that end, Part 2 of The Call to Write categorizes writing by its everyday social functions, such as reporting, commenting, reviewing, proposing, and remembering. These social functions of writing are called genres when they take the form of recognizable models such as news reports, op/ed commentaries, personal letters, or grant proposals. Studying genres, in addition to traditional critical skills, helps students discover not only common patterns in how writers use language purposefully, but also how these patterns vary from one community, audience, and genre to another.

Writers and their audiences working together--this is part of what genre study offers. People find themselves in situations that call upon them to write, and the meaning of what they write is determined not just by the writer but by the relationships among writer, audience, context, and form. To these situations, genres provide familiar structures that help writers and readers determine meaning easily. Genres recur in similar situations and serve
similar purposes. Writers and readers can immediately determine part of the meaning of a text just from its genre.

*The Call to Write* puts genre study into practice. In the critical skills instruction of Part 1, writing and reading are complementary activities. Chapter 2, “Reading Strategies: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation,” asks students to move from simply reading and remembering what they have read to actively engaging the text through a process of inquiry that leads naturally to writing. Conversely, responding and evaluating become common practices for the writing reader. *The Call to Write* prepares student readers for critical engagement with texts. Students are asked to notice elements of text that they may not have consciously considered before. Document design, for example, is not simply a surface structure but a significant contributor to meaning. Becoming more critical as readers provides students with principles that they can apply to their own writing. In addition to helping students become more critical readers, *The Call to Write* urges the reading writer toward more deliberate production of texts by expanding the writer's awareness of choices and constraints. By the time students begin the genre-based writing assignments of Part 2, they are prepared to analyze and reproduce the functions of, and stances represented in, each of the genres presented.

**TEACHING GENRES**

Both teachers and students will appreciate the stimulating, meaningful writing activities contained in Part 2 of *The Call to Write*. Teachers will find themselves able to construct syllabi in which they can teach from their strengths, so that they are giving their students the benefit of their expertise and experience in writing and teaching. The following general approaches will help you construct such a syllabus:

**Teach principles of writing in context.** You have a great deal of experience and expertise in figuring out how to accomplish a variety of academic and non-academic writing tasks.
Instead of teaching principles of "good writing" and then showing students how to use them, present your class with writing tasks and then guide them in figuring out good ways to accomplish them. When the class discusses the genre models in Chapters 4 through 11, help them notice what seems to work in each and what type of situation each addresses. Then students can apply those developing working principles to the writing tasks that you assign or that they choose.

Choose among the genres. If, for example, you wish to focus your course on everyday and personal writing, you might focus on the chapters on letters, memoirs, and profiles, along with the section on literacy narratives. The breadth of examples in this text allows you to discuss and teach whichever genres and models you feel most capable of covering responsibly.

The Call to Write is constructed to guide both teacher and students through the processes of addressing various calls to write. It does not leave teachers on their own to create all new assignments or to find models of each of the genres. Rather than focus on a narrowly defined "academic writing"--which in some textbooks simply means the critical or analytical essay--The Call to Write offers a wide array of writing situations and tasks, all of which contribute to students' academic writing skills without confining students' writing to overdetermined notions of the "academic essay."

The following sample assignment demonstrates the principle. This assignment, developed by Ulrike Jaeckel for a composition class that focuses on environmental issues, develops and evaluates aspects of writing (design, purpose, audience, tone, etc.) that are essential to good academic writing. Yet the assignment is a genre assignment: a letter.
Sample Assignment (Letter)

Due: First draft of letter: August 31.
Second draft of letter, first draft of explanation: Sept. 2.
Final versions: Sept. 4 (include all drafts).

Context: In this course we are exploring concerns about the environment. That is, we'll want to know who worries about the environment in what ways. During the first half of the semester you will write a report on an environmental problem of your choice and a profile of an organization that tries to do something about this problem. In order to prepare for these two assignments, you will write a letter to initiate your search process.

Assignment: As you explore environmental problems and organizations, think about persons who might be able to help you with your thinking or with finding information. Your task will be to decide on the purpose and the person to address.

The assignment has two parts: the letter itself, and an explanation of and reflection on why you wrote this kind of letter to this person (one page).

Consult Trimbur's *The Call to Write* and Aaron's *Little, Brown Handbook* to plan and design your letter.

Mailing: Part of the assignment is that you will mail your letter to the person you are addressing. If you are confident that your letter is well-crafted, you can dispatch a copy of the version you hand in on September 4. If you would like some input before sending the letter, wait until I return it so you can adjust your text once more.

Note: Type your explanation according to the specifications ("paper format") in our syllabus. Save your draft and the final version on a floppy disk and, as insurance against a lost paper, print out an extra copy for yourself.

Grading: Your grade will be based on these criteria
1. Does your letter look like a letter?
2. Is the purpose for the letter clear?
3. Is the letter well adapted to its reader (in tone and content)?
4. Does your explanation provide good reasons for writing the letter that you wrote?
5. Have you written clearly structured sentences and paragraphs?
6. Have you avoided errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation?
Can students handle such a variety of models for writing? Focusing on a few genres helps to address this concern. On the other hand, you may want to design your course so that it addresses the myriad writing tasks that students are already asked to confront and will confront in the future. Such a writing course can help students become flexible, resourceful writers. From this perspective, teaching a variety of models may be beneficial, rather than detrimental, to writing education. Consider a balance between focus and flexibility.

The genre-based instruction of *The Call to Write* is based on principles of "real" writing:

1. *Writers do not speak alone, separate from a community of readers.* Even when seemingly writing for themselves, writers are influenced by their culture and community.

2. *Writing instruction should be closely linked to other areas of the curriculum and also to a world of everyday, public, and workplace writing.* Genre-based instruction, for example, is important to writing across the curriculum, service learning, and technical writing.

3. *Students have already mastered many everyday writing genres.* Thus *The Call to Write* "authorizes" students; they begin the composition course as already accomplished members of various writing communities.

Genre theory may require new thinking or more conscious approaches, but many of your teaching practices will remain the same. Teachers can bring genre into the classroom when they question students about purpose and audience; when they present a topic for an essay to be sent as a letter to the editor; when they ask students to write analyses that involve critical judgment; or when they assign journal entries. As you use *The Call to Write* to teach composition, you will find that much of what you are accustomed to doing in the classroom becomes easier, thanks to the genre emphasis of the text.
A genre-centered approach to writing instruction will lead many teachers and students to a changed idea of the writing classroom itself. The concept of genre motivates students to explore genres of writing that they encounter in other disciplines, in the workplace, and in public discourse. Genre study invites students to step out of the confines of the classroom and discover their role as writers in a variety of contexts.

Each chapter in Part 2 offers general principles about genre, asks users to analyze models, and, finally, helps them write their own texts. The following list is designed to give you a structural understanding of how the chapters unfold, as well as to offer tips for teaching the genres.

1. For an overview understanding of each genre, refer to the initial "Thinking about the Genre" sections at the beginnings of each chapter. There you will find definitions, general examples, and purposes for each genre. This section also lays the foundation for the next step--viewing models of the genre and analyzing those models in the "For Critical Inquiry" questions.

2. To give students practice reading in the genre, the “Readings” sections focus students' attention on discovering the characteristics of the genre, the ways arguments or positions are advanced through such models, and how the pieces fit into larger cultural contexts.

3. To highlight students' pre-existing expertise in the genre, "Looking at the Genre: (Letters, Memoirs, etc.)" taps students' experiences with and knowledge of each genre, including what they have just learned from the chapter models, by asking them to make in-depth analyses.
4. Each chapter also explains the visual and textual conventions of the genre. *The Call to Write* offers detailed directions for document design, both in each genre chapter and also in an independent chapter (Chapter 19). To illuminate the role format or design plays in conveying meaning, the genre chapters ask student writers to analyze the design of certain texts. These exercises are also helpful to composition teachers, most of whom are accustomed to designing and evaluating only essay-formatted documents. Addressing document design issues in class may help you not only to teach non-academic writing better, but it may also help you to establish your criteria for grading genre-based assignments.

5. For specific writing assignments, look to the latter part of each genre chapter, where you will find a variety of assignment options. For example, the "Writing Assignment" section of Chapter 4, "Letters," includes options for writing 1) a letter to parents; 2) a letter of advice to a younger relative or students; 3) a letter to the editor; 4) a letter of appeal; or 5) a posting to an electronic discussion group. Each assignment there is detailed in a step-by-step process, proceeding from invention and planning, through drafting and editing the documents.

**INTEGRATING RHETORICAL MODES WITH GENRE STUDY**

Genres are not merely the rhetorical modes revisited. However, discussion of the rhetorical modes as composing strategies for larger pieces of writing is integrated into *The Call to Write*. Discussion of these composing strategies is found in Chapter 14, “The Form of Nonfiction Prose.”

In the past, composition instruction relied on the rhetorical modes as a framework for teaching writing. The list of modes varied from one classroom to another but often included comparison and contrast, definition, description, narration, summary, synthesis, analysis, and argument. These modes were regarded as universal formulas for composing in any situation.
Composition textbook chapters, accordingly, were often organized according to the rhetorical modes and used the modes as structures for entire assignments: the description or definition paper, the comparison/contrast essay, the personal narrative, or the evaluation/response. Research assignments and argument essays were then expected to feature the modes in various combinations.

*The Call to Write* offers a fresh, vivid approach: the modes are forms of reasoning and structuring real-life calls to write. *The Call to Write* teaches that writing is always situational; thus, students use the modes to solve rhetorical problems, and not as ends in themselves.

**Genres are not passive forms, but active responses to calls to write.** The writing process, again integrated into the genre chapters, gains greater rhetorical focus when students attend to genre as a means of understanding audience and purpose.

**Teachers can help students plan their writing by demonstrating the various stages of a writing process.** Writers often find themselves beginning a writing task at the very last minute, sometimes because they aren't sure how to begin; at other times, because they don't realize how time-consuming the process will be. In addition to standard elements of that process, which typically include invention, planning, drafting, and revising, *The Call to Write* asks students to add critical thinking about genre to those stages. Students should think critically about the choices they make when writing in context, as well as the assumptions that audiences bring to the reading of a text. With this explicit consideration in their writing process, students can successfully evaluate their options and constraints in any call to write.

*The Call to Write* is organized into three main sections: the elements of critical reading and writing (Part 1); an introduction to genres of writing (Part 2); and guidance in the writing process--including collaboration, revision, editing, research, and document design (Parts 3-6). As you design your syllabus, taking into account your students'
experience and expertise in writing, you may find one of these approaches useful:

1. Students who need an introduction to critical reading and writing skills will especially benefit from a syllabus that focuses on Parts 1 and 3-6. Such a syllabus will spend less time on Part 2. Select a few genres from Part 2, so that your class gains some experience with responding to a variety of calls to write. But students in introductory courses will need intensive study of Part 1, Writing and Reading. Throughout the semester, introduce the writing process chapters in Parts 3-6 as necessary. In addition, consider asking the students to keep the Writing Inventories that are interspersed throughout the early chapters of The Call to Write. Doing so requires active consideration of the role of genres in their lives already.

2. A second approach, suited to the needs of more experienced students, organizes the syllabus around the genres introduced in Part 2 and then refers to Parts 1 and 3-6 as needed.

3. If you expect to be teaching students with a wide range of expertise and experience, or if you don't have a basis on which to anticipate the relative preparedness of the students whom you'll be teaching, you can use the organization of The Call to Write as the outline for your course: begin with Part 1 and work sequentially through the chapters. Then during the course, if your students' work indicates difficulty with a chapter, you can slow the course down and spend additional time on those materials. (Remember, too, to review at intervals during the semester, reminding the class of what they have learned.) Conversely, if the class seems to grasp the material of a chapter readily, you can move more quickly through that chapter, selecting just one or two representative activities.
Once you have chosen the general approach for your syllabus, you will want to preview the assignments at the end of each chapter in *The Call to Write*; some of them may suggest structures for your course.

**DESIGNING YOUR ASSIGNMENTS**

*The Call to Write* includes several major types of assignments that recur throughout the book:

1. **For Critical Inquiry and Exploring Your Experience** questions, which you may want to use as journal prompts, ask students to analyze models and to consider how each functions in its context. From doing these assignments, students can learn the functions and forms of each genre before writing in that genre. As they view them in a more critical way than they have in the past, your students may be delighted to realize how much they already know about the genres.

2. **Peer Commentary** questions facilitate reviews of peer drafts in progress. In these assignments, students are analyzing work that is not professionally polished. As they do these assignments, be sure they notice what is working and what is not; otherwise, they may gravitate toward exclusively negative critique, focusing on problems. You can use some of these assignments for in-class writing, for developing major student projects, or for training peer response groups. These assignments will work especially well if the whole class works together on a few, with you pushing them beyond shallow, ready answers.

3. **Chapter Writing Assignments** offer detailed guidance for extended writing projects. These include general guidelines as well as detailed instructions for proceeding through multiple stages of the process. You should clarify and supplement these with your own concerns for the assignment, but you will find that the text has done much of the work for you. These assignments
are complete and well-sequenced; from them, you can select the major writing assignments for your course. Within the assignments, students will find what teachers traditionally call the modes. The modes are useful as sections or parts of a genre piece.

4. **Reflecting on Your Writing** questions invite students to consider the work they’ve done, with prompts to get them started. This can be an effective way to bring closure to an assignment, and to connect new knowledge to old.

5. **Closing Note** questions invite students to take work they’ve drafted and revised in the classroom and either to put it into the world, or to consider how this might be done, and what effects their writing might have.

**You can encourage critical thought by engaging students in classroom debates about appropriate responses to calls to write.** The following is an example of how such a debate might be structured:

1. Divide the class into groups, handing each group three separate calls to write. (See Chapter 6 in this instructor's manual for advice about coordinating collaborative work.) Possible class projects include obtaining funds for a school recycling project; offering students possibilities for alcohol-free weekend entertainment; or informing voters of their polling places.

2. Ask each group to discuss which genre to use to address the problem; to identify what they hope to achieve through using that genre; and to decide how the genre might be applied to this particular situation.

3. Reconvene the whole class and compare the small groups' decisions on how genres respond to varying calls to write. This will help students make more deliberate choices later when faced with their own calls to write.
Your grading criteria will vary from one assignment to the next. Still, any or all of the following can help you develop appropriate, effective criteria that your students will understand:

1. You may do this task yourself, but you may find it productive for you and the class to do together: For each assignment that you give, select a specific model or models that epitomize successful writing in that genre. You can choose from the plentiful examples in *The Call to Write*, or you can select examples from the specific situations that you and your students encounter, such as commentary from the campus newspaper, or a school policy statement.

2. Assign a genre study in which students compare and contrast several examples of one genre in order to identify the necessary characteristics from successful writing in that genre. This list can then become part of your grading criteria for the subsequent assignment.

3. Require that each student, when handing in an assignment, attach a cover sheet that identifies the individual writer's purpose and audience for the assignment. Your grading of the assignment will then account for how well they accomplish their purposes and anticipate their audiences.

The more you can involve your students in defining, analyzing, writing, and reviewing the ways in which genres act and the ways in which modes are part of genres, the more you will find yourself reading really provocative and effective documents.

**FOR FURTHER READING**


Devitt, Amy J. "Generalizing about Genre: New Conceptions of an Old Concept." *College Composition and Communication* 44.4 (December 1993): 573-86.


Trimbur, John. “Composition and the Circulation of Writing.” *College Composition and Communication* 52.2 (December 2000): 188-219.
CHAPTER 2

Teaching Academic Writing

[A]cademic writing is not only something that students must learn how to do in their own self-defense during their college years. . . it also ought to be a useful mental discipline that college graduates can draw upon, directly or indirectly, for the rest of their lives.

Robert Scholes

THINKING ABOUT ACADEMIC WRITING

By focusing on relationships among the conventions, forms, and functions of writing, genre study enables students to adapt to the wide variety of situations in which the social action of writing occurs. The college classroom is one of these situations. By attending to genre, composition teachers can improve their students' writing not only in composition classes but also in their writing for other academic courses. The Call to Write helps students to anticipate and adapt to the variety of calls to write that arise throughout the curriculum. The commentary and the review are genres as familiar to the classroom as to the "real world"; school is no less real than the workplace, the public sphere, or everyday life. Thus teaching the conventions and genres of academic writing enhances the quality of students' experience not only "later" or "beyond the writing class," but in the immediate here and now, where many students need and want it most.

The Call to Write offers teachers a unique opportunity to build a visible bridge between academic writing and the myriad forms of writing that exist outside the academy. For instance, given the increasingly ubiquitous presence of technology, and the powerful ways that it mediates the writing situation, students may find themselves more frequently producing writing outside the most typical academic genres—manuals, brochures, websites and other web documents—both inside and outside classrooms. Similarly, though some pose academic writing as opposite “real world” writing, many of the practices of the academic writer, such as research, creating and
supporting arguments, developing a point, critical thought, have what we might call “transfer value” outside of academia. In short, *The Call to Write* is uniquely positioned to engage students in the equally valuable discourses of academia and the world outside of it, and to practice the border crossing that makes one an adept writer in either context.

**TEACHING ACADEMIC WRITING**

**Genre-based writing can help to make the rhetorical situation of academic writing more apparent.** Genre-based instruction is appropriate not only to real-world writing for real-world audiences but also for traditional academic assignments. *The Call to Write* offers conventional academic assignments, presented not as modes of writing (see Chapter 1 of this Manual), but as rhetorically complete genres. Your students can come to view themselves as writers within a specific context, with distinctive constraints and conventions, writing to a certain kind of audience known as a professor.

*The Call to Write* teaches competencies common to most general education curricula. Most composition courses teach a host of generalized skills that serve the general university curriculum. These competencies include research techniques, the use of sources (including summary, paraphrasing and citation, but also analysis, synthesis, and critical response), composing processes (invention and revision), and adapting to the specific conventions of academic writing (including citation and usage). *The Call to Write* addresses each of these topics in all their richness. The book also teaches often-overlooked formal elements (such as prose style and document design) that figure significantly in most readers' evaluation of texts.

*The Call to Write* offers resources for teaching style and arrangement. Many of the textual ideals featured in composition instruction--ideals such as coherence, unity, purpose, development, and clarity--describe "academic" ways of organizing and presenting ideas. *The Call to Write* includes a chapter, “The Form of Nonfiction Prose,” which covers topic sentences, transition, ordering, linking evidence to claims, parallelism, and effective openings and closings. Finally, Chapter 21 offers help on revising sentences.
If you decide to focus your course on genre-based academic writing, you may want to organize it according to the following three categories:

1. Rhetorical Analysis

In order for students to think critically about the issues they write about, they must first understand how communication functions as a response to various situations. As *The Call to Write* explains in "Entering a Controversy: Analyzing the Issues," writers need to listen, observe, and think before they jump into a conversation.

To prepare students for this kind of engagement, *The Call to Write* begins with a straightforward explanation of the generic rhetorical situation in the introduction to Part 1, "Factors that Writers Take into Account." The key to this textbook lies in understanding the ways that audience, writer, context, and text (genre) interact to generate meanings for readers and purposes for writers. Knowing this, students can see the acts of reading and writing as complementary solutions to a given rhetorical "equation": as readers interpret the intended meaning of an author's text, so writers imagine purposes as needs of an imagined audience.

After Chapter 1 considers various contexts and purposes for writing, Chapter 2, "Reading Strategies: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation," carefully examines strategies for helping students gain more deliberate control over their roles as readers and writers. This section suggests techniques for making sense of sources, including summarizing, outlining, and annotating; techniques for critically evaluating facts, claims, and evidence; and methods for uncovering biases and fallacies.

Finally, students have the opportunity to see how analysis can take form in a Commentary (Chapter 9), a Review (Chapter 11), or even an Essay Exam response (Chapter 20).
2. Research

Diverse calls to write require varying approaches to research. Chapter 16, "Research Projects: Using Print and Electronic Sources," expands the discussion from Chapter 2 to include specific techniques for integrating sources into academic writing--from summary and paraphrasing to quotation and citation. Overall, Part 4, "Guide to Research," offers additional suggestions for evaluating sources, as well as extensive guidance on library, electronic, and field research (interviews, surveys, etc.). "Public Documents" (Chapter 6), "Profiles" (Chapter 7), and "Fact Sheets and FAQs, Brochures and Websites" (Chapter 8) provide appropriate forms in which students can publish their research results.

3. Rhetorical Analysis of Argument

Chapter 3, "Argument, Persuasion and Responsibility," explores how to analyze issues (stasis), how to use rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, pathos) to develop a rhetorical stance, and how to authorize claims with evidence or explanation.

The following sample assignments illustrate a genre approach to academic writing. In addition to the many assignments in *The Call to Write*, the following sample assignments are appropriate for a composition course that features academic writing tasks such as critical reading, research, and argument. Using the following sequence of assignments, you can lead your class through a progressive inquiry into a public topic of interest to students--a topic that perhaps you and your students choose together. The first assignment (critical reading and analysis) lays a foundation for critical reading and rhetorical analysis. In the second assignment, students research their topic. In the third and final assignment, they combine analysis and subject matter expertise to construct their own argument in the form of a commentary.
The following assignments offer a good opportunity to teach the appropriate use of summary, quotations, paraphrase, and citations. Chapter 17 covers the integration of sources in academic writing—specifically summary, paraphrase, quotation, and citation.

Sample Assignment 1: Critical Reading and Analysis

Instructions for students

In this assignment, you will practice a type of rhetorical analysis. In order to better understand how meaning is created through text, you will examine some of the strategies used in argument. Concentrate on the text at hand. Your opinions on the issue are an important element of the rhetorical situation and will undoubtedly affect how you approach your text. But, for now, concentrate on how the text itself can be used to study a rhetorical situation. Therefore, remember to support your analysis with specific textual evidence.

1. Select a recent commentary that argues for a certain position on a debatable public issue. You'll find it easiest to use a short text, such as a speech, newspaper editorial, magazine commentary, or political ad.

2. Consider the argument in terms of its rhetorical situation. Begin by studying the structure of your text. Summarizing the argument's main points and significant details will reveal much about the writer's argumentative strategy. Review Chapter 2, "Reading and Writing: The Critical Connection," for advice.

3. Review the "factors that writers take into account" and identify the key elements as they apply to your source text, including:
   - **Writer/speaker**: Who is speaking? What do you know about the writer?
   - **Purpose(s)**: What is the "call to write"? Why is the writer making this argument? What does he or she intend to accomplish? Is this purpose stated, or implied?
   - **Audience(s)**: Who is the intended audience?
   - **Genre**: What conventions of form are employed?
   - **Context**: In what context was the argument presented?

4. Finally, consider the relationships among the key elements of the situation. For example:
Are any elements especially meaningful in this situation? For example, is the occasion especially significant? Is it unusual that this particular writer chose to speak about this particular issue in this particular way?

What assumptions might an audience make about the writer? How does the audience's knowledge of the writer constrain or empower his or her ability to speak on this issue?

What assumptions does the writer seem to make about his or her audience? Does he or she assume that the audience members share the same context? How is this evident in the writer's stylistic decisions, such as word choice, voice, and tone?

Are there factors about the issue itself that this argument takes into account, such as an audience's attitudes toward the issue? For example, what topics are stressed or ignored?

Are there other audiences? Does the argument favor one particular audience or attempt to appeal to many? How?

How did the context help to determine which genre was chosen? How is this genre called for by this particular audience or purpose? How does this particular genre advance or limit the argument?

**Grading Criteria**

An analytical essay like the preceding one does not have to be tightly "thesis driven." You can, however, expect it to be readable and coherent. Remind students that this is an exercise in engaging a specific text; they must construct their own essays using the text as a primary source. As critical readers, students will need to choose which relationships among key elements are most interesting--or contribute most significantly to meaning--in the given rhetorical situation.
Sample Assignment 2: Research Report

Instructions for students: In this assignment, you will conduct research to explore the rhetorical contexts of a public controversy of your choice. Begin by reading "Entering a Controversy: Analyzing the Issues" (Chapter 3), which explains why research is a necessary prerequisite to making your own argument. This paper moves beyond analyzing a single text, toward surveying a field of discussion. This assignment is intended to build on our previous work--namely, rhetorical analysis. Remember, this course is not about abortion or affirmative action or underage drinking; it's about engaging in writing.

This project seems deceptively simple: to report on a variety of viewpoints, or arguments, on a given topic. However, this is no ordinary research report. This assignment differs because you're not simply assembling sources. Rhetorical analysis enables you to present not just what everyone's saying about a particular topic, but how various arguments are being made. Examining this "rhetorical field" should deepen your understanding of your topic, which will help you (in your next assignment) to make a more effective, sophisticated case for your own position.

[Note: There is no genre chapter in The Call to Write that treats the academic research report as a genre. However, there are several genres in which this sort of research could be represented, such as the profile or a website. Moreover, Part 4, "Guide to Research," offers specific guidance on conducting research and on using it to write a standard research paper, along with exemplars (see chapters 16 and 18 in particular).]

1. Select a significant public controversy, then investigate every major perspective, position, and argument that you can find on your topic. Keep accurate notes and bibliography. Because this assignment can mushroom without careful planning, you'll need to draft a prospectus, or proposal, for your projects. See Part 4, "Doing Research," and especially "Writing a Proposal." Specifically, your prospectus should:

   - Describe your intended audience(s).
   - Describe the form your project will take.
   - Include an annotated source list.
2. Use what we've learned about rhetorical analysis to examine the various ongoing "conversations":

   What are the issues at stake?
   How are arguments being made?
   Who is making them?
   To whom are they making them?

3. Compose a report designed to make the information you’ve found accessible and understandable. As with the last assignment, your purpose is to inform, explain, and analyze.

**Grading Criteria**

Before they hand in the final draft of the preceding assignment, students will benefit from your posing review questions. Then when you grade their papers, you may want to draw from this list of review questions to set your grading criteria:

a. What "significant public controversy" does this project address?
b. What are the major issues and/or policies at stake?
c. Does the project design "make the information you’ve found accessible and understandable"? Suggestions?
d. Does the project fulfill the assignment? In other words, which purposes (to inform, explain, and analyze) have been fulfilled adequately?
e. Is the project balanced and objective? Any clear biases toward a perspective?
f. Does it represent every major viewpoint? Which, if any, are excluded?
g. Who is the intended audience? How does the project accommodate this audience? Suggestions?
h. What is the form, or genre, of the project? Does the project effectively employ the conventions of this form or genre? Suggestions? Does the project represent adequate research? Suggestions for further research?
i. How does the project cite its sources?
j. If it's a group project, do you think it represents a team effort? Is it substantially "bigger or better" than an individual project?
k. Has the project given you a good picture of the "rhetorical field" surrounding this issue? What questions do you still have?
The following assignment offers an opportunity to work closely with revising and editing prose style. "Commentary is the genre of writing that uses analysis and interpretation to find patterns of meaning in events, trends, and ideas. The purpose of commentary is not simply to report on things but to give readers a way to make sense of them" (The Call to Write, 295). Students will have been working on these topics in the previous assignments, perhaps even composing some commentary already. Assigning a shorter essay here will allow for multiple revisions with careful attention to prose. Consider having students compose part of their first draft in class using free-writing.

Sample Assignment 3: Argument/Commentary

Instructions for students:

For this assignment, your purpose is to "make sense of" a topic for your audience. What's "the news"? What can you give your reader that he or she doesn't already know? What major issues (e.g., fact, definition, circumstance, or jurisdiction) are at the heart of this controversy?

Most effective commentaries back up their claims with evidence. Your credibility as a commentator depends on whether your readers think you know what you're talking about. This means "doing your homework." One of the main purposes for the previous assignment was to make you an "expert" on your topic; now it's time to use that expertise.

Consider your commentary as an argument. As such, you'll present a thesis (main point), developed through claims (arguable propositions), which are in turn supported by various types of backing (evidence, examples, reasoning, personal opinion, experience, etc.). If you look carefully at published commentaries, you'll discover that they offer much more than opinions. Everybody has opinions; how can you demonstrate to an audience that yours are superior to others?

1. Pre-writing assignment:
   - Review the common characteristics of commentaries.
Read and analyze three published commentaries, then write a paragraph that describes the common features. This should help you determine what the genre entails.

2. Select and use a model commentary. Emulating a specific example will provide you with specific guidance for style, organization, content, layout, etc.

3. As you're composing and revising, review "Naming Your Topic," "Framing the Issue," "Designing an Ending," "Emphasizing the Main Point," and "Beginnings and Endings." Here are some review questions to guide your revisions:

What "significant public issue" does this commentary address?
What's "the news," or main point?
What major claims are made?
How does the writer back up his or her claims (e.g., evidence, examples, reasoning, personal opinion, experience, metaphor, etc.)? Give specific examples.
Does this commentary rely too heavily on any particular type of backing?
How successful is this writer's attempt to "make sense of" this topic for you? How easy is it to follow his or her reasoning?
How credible is this writer? How can you tell?
What tone does the writer employ? What is the writer's attitude toward his/her topic? Toward his/her audience? How can you tell? Give specific examples from the text.
In what ways does this text conform to or deviate from the conventions of the genre? Comment here on style, organization, content, layout, length, etc. Give specific examples.
What would you do to make this commentary more provocative or convincing?

Grading
Appropriate grading criteria for this assignment include readability, a clearly defined purpose, coherence, unity, and appropriate mechanics and style, in addition to the other rhetorical features in the preceding list of review questions.
The preceding assignments demonstrate ways in which instructors might use the genre-based instruction of *The Call to Write* to support a class whose purpose is to teach academic writing. As you develop your own syllabus for academic writing, you may want to consider adapting these assignments to your own aims. You will find that working with *The Call to Write* spurs you to construct vivid assignments that your students will appreciate; the benefits of these tasks are readily apparent to students of *The Call to Write*.

**FOR FURTHER READING**


Davis, Robert, and Mark Shadle. “‘Building a Mystery’: Alternative Research Writing and the Academic Act of Seeking.” *College Composition and Communication* 51.3 (February 2000): 417-46.


CHAPTER 3

Teaching Writing Beyond the Academy

In effect, what I am asking is that we consider becoming rhetoricians again, dedicated to fostering public discourse.

Patricia Bizzell

THINKING ABOUT PUBLIC WRITING

Though most composition classes teach students how to write in academic communities, recent scholarship also emphasizes the importance of providing students with experience in and skills for adapting their writing to a variety of communities' expectations.

Several important approaches to composition instruction have emerged from this mandate. Writing across the curriculum (WAC) considers the calls to write in all the academic disciplines. Students in WAC classrooms think about language and writing in disciplinary terms instead of being taught only generalized writing skills. Popular culture has also made inroads into composition studies, drawing on students' knowledge of and experience with the popular media with which they are in constant contact. More recently, composition classes dedicated to community service learning bring teachers and students into public conversations and direct social action. Instructors send students to write grants and mission statements with members of community organizations, for example, or ask them to tutor in community literacy programs. Some composition courses even place students in workplace internships.

These are only a few examples of the move toward expanding the scope and context of composition instruction. The Call to Write facilitates all of these types of writing and more in its emphasis on writing in context and in its focus on the genres that respond to specific calls to write. Offering
instruction in both academic and writing outside the academy, The Call to Write opens up the fields of writing represented in the composition classroom.

Practicing writing in contexts other than school creates new challenges and opportunities. For instance, attention to genres as they are employed in non-school locales makes clear that "good" writing is not an eternal verity inscribed in writers’ handbooks but instead depends on purpose, context, writer, audience--and, yes, genre. Although this principle might seem to ignore the forms of writing typically valued by English departments, when students begin to realize that criteria for writing are tied to the rhetorical situation, they may find themselves better attuned to the rhetorical constraints and opportunities of all writing situations--including academic ones. In addition, students have extensive knowledge of everyday genres of writing. For instance, most have successfully written and received personal, business, and electronic letters; they have studied a variety of public documents, such as birth certificates, Social Security cards, marriage licenses, and student codes; and they have read commentaries in magazines, newspapers, and the World Wide Web. Thus they come to the composition class already experienced in the forms of literacy about which the class will teach them even more.

Writers engaged in writing beyond the academy may have a better sense of the spectrum of writing tasks, contexts, audiences, and purposes than those only viewing academic writing tasks. They will be able to compare and contrast conventions, formats, styles, and problems from group to group, community to community.

To summarize, public writing is useful because: 1) students already have some groundwork built for genres generally used outside the academy; 2) such writing is preparation for the "real world" after college life; 3) it is also preparation specifically for the workplace, which constitutes a large part of what most students hope to be trained for by coming to college; 4) it authorizes students to take even more responsibility for their writing because of its possible impact in the community; 5) it demands that writers see themselves as part of larger discussions, not simply "studying" those
discussions; 6) writing ethics are brought to the fore; and 7) seeing multiple contexts for and modes of discourse shows that writing is not one single set of rules and purposes.

TEACHING PUBLIC WRITING

An overview of how The Call to Write presents public writing will help you think about how to adapt this textbook to your own purposes:

Chapter 1, "The Call to Write in Context," introduces student writers to the contexts in which writing can occur, three of the four of which are non-academic.

In Chapter 2, "Reading and Writing," students learn to read multiple genres in order to learn to engage the discussions found there.

Chapter 3, "Argument, Persuasion, and Responsibility," facilitates an understanding of how argument transcends genre and is found in non-academic settings as well as academic ones.

The core of the emphasis on writing beyond the academy lies in Chapters 4 through 11, "Genres of Writing."

Chapter 18, "Document Design," is critical to writing beyond the academy because design is essential to the reception and interpretation of a message.

Writing beyond the academy can send students into the forums of public life, or it can keep them in the composition classroom while involving them in public genres of writing. The Call to Write leaves the options open. It helps writers to consider the public models of writing they encounter every day in the form of genres, as well as models of genres with which they may be less familiar. Students begin to formulate ideas for their own responses to multiple calls to write by discussing the contexts in which genre models exist, the audiences each seems to address, and the possibilities
for design. Applying the learned writing principles to their calls to write, whether inside or outside the classroom, then becomes a vivid task for your students.

*The Call to Write* allows a focus on workplace writing. Another benefit of integrating non-academic writing assignments and experiences is preparation for the workplace. Though the demands of workplace writing differ from occupation to occupation, several genres tend to dominate. You can design a workplace assignment or unit by drawing on Chapter 4, "Letters"; Chapter 8, "Reports"; and Chapter 10, "Proposals." *The Call to Write* is not a technical writing- or business writing-focused text, but it does offer models of such writing.

A focus on public issues creates opportunities for students to become more practiced at entering civic discourse. Introductory composition texts often ask students to consider social issues and problems as "topics" for their writing. Indeed, many writing instructors value writing that addresses such social issues. In response to this value, *The Call to Write* asks students to see their writing as part of the social interactions that create and sustain or resist and defeat such problems. Instead of writing "about" issues in which someone "out there" is involved, students become part of the conversations. The result is that student writers occupy positions of responsibility and possibility in regard to civic discourse. If you are interested in heightening students' awareness of their roles in the discussions they enter, encourage or require them to send their work out to audiences who might be interested. Letters can be addressed to members of Congress and to newspapers. Proposals might be submitted to the student activities committee to implement campus changes. Reports could be published on the Web for a broad audience. Doing so, students will inevitably begin to see that their writing does not exist in a vacuum, that it is not just for their eyes and the eyes of the teacher. Writing with a destination demands serious focus. Student writers see their work contributing to distinct conversations and goals.

Writing beyond the academy also asks students to consider a variety of ethical concerns. Academia has its own set of ethical standards and
behaviors, while other communities beyond the academy differ in their approaches. However, the teaching of writing ethics often gets either overlooked or reduced to plagiarism prosecution in academic writing. Because writing in genres outside the academy raises issues of audience, context, and purpose, writing ethics is highlighted. Students are able to discuss how they are responsible for considering their words’ effects on the intended audience. If that audience is concerned with poverty, the student will need to be cautious in creating arguments about welfare reform, for example. You will want to use the ethics boxes throughout the text to address arising ethical dilemmas (see Chapter 4 of this Instructor’s Manual for more guidance on teaching the ethics of writing in and beyond the academy).

Choose the Contexts for Your Students' Public Writing. Will the non-academic writing be simulated or real? You may want to adopt one of the following three models to the exclusion of the others, or you may want to use some combination of them:

1. **The Community Service Model**

   For some, writing beyond the academy means leaving the physical confines of the university for social, political, and practical action. Under such circumstances, students are able to see the immediacy of their writing. This approach requires extensive planning and is generally best coordinated by groups of instructors. Community contacts must be made and maintained and students should be sensitized to the situations they will enter, whether these are workplace settings or community service projects. By taking students out of the familiarity and predictability of the academic environment, community projects can make students uncomfortable. This discomfort may lead to growth as writers and members of the community, but it will also require that you prepare the students carefully and then mentor them closely during the project.
Some service-learning and business writing instructors even ask site contacts to become helpers in grading, since they are intimately involved with the students' work and with the criteria for evaluating writing at the site. Like any collaboration, this approach to grading can be vexing yet rewarding. Your direct relationships with the on-site contact people will be essential.

If you design a course that involves students' direct intervention in communities other than academic ones, you will need to be very clear about what you expect. Consider including in your syllabus a statement of responsibility regarding student projects.

_The Call to Write_ does not itself explain how to create and maintain internships and service programs. But if you are interested in pursuing such options, the sources listed below ("For Further Reading") offer ample guidance. You will also benefit from talking with other teachers who are participating in off-campus projects before setting up your own.

2. **The Classroom-Only Model**

Effecting less dramatic changes on the composition classroom, writing beyond the academy might simply mean that the types of writing done in the classroom more closely resemble those done outside academic disciplines. Teaching such a class, you could remain in the classroom while more directly addressing issues and concerns of businesses, nonprofit organizations, individuals in their everyday lives, and public groups. While the setting for the writing will be your classroom, the writing done in it will be non-academic in nature. Although your students will appreciate the opportunity to try a variety of writing styles and genres, they may not be able to envision audience and context as clearly as they would if they were interacting with a "real" audience in a "real" non-academic setting. Hence, one of your challenges will be to help them focus on the hypothetical audiences for their writing "outside the academy."
3. **The Community Engagement Model**

In yet a third model, you may require your students to conduct interviews or do other field research outside the academy. Your students will conduct active field research but will do their writing for the composition class, not for the public sphere. Many students really value learning about field work (interviewing, surveying, shadowing) as valid forms of research. Their investment in the writing often increases after talking to people in the field, actively gathering information from sources other than just texts. A word of caution: when they are assigned to interview people outside your classroom, be sure they are prepared to explain their task clearly, so that the interviewees aren't suspicious, resistant, or even hostile to the contact. A good preparatory project will involve the entire class in composing one-page or even one-paragraph explanations of purpose that can be handed to potential interviewees.

**Choose the focus of your instruction**

Determining the focus of writing instruction is equally important for designing your syllabus. Trying to teach all types of writing in one semester would be overwhelming for both you and the students in your classes. Choosing from the following three organizational options can contribute to the structure and focus of your course:

1. **Focusing on Genres**

Choose several genres that seem to fit together—e.g., reports, commentaries, and proposals; or letters, memoirs, and profiles. Set up assignment sequences that take the class through reading, analyzing, discussing, and writing in each genre that you have chosen.

As you teach the genres you have chosen, your students will benefit from the critical skills instruction in Parts 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of *The Call to Write*. You can plan in advance how to integrate this instruction with the genre-based material; or you can preview the materials in Parts 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6.
and then, as issues arise concerning your students' critical reading and writing skills, you can intersperse appropriate instruction and assignments from Parts 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 into your genre-based syllabus.

At the end of each of your genre-based assignment sequences, guide students through a process of comparison and contrast. What are the distinctive characteristics of each genre? What are the similarities among the genres? This will serve as review and will also help them see possible future applications of what they have learned.

2. Focusing on Communities

Discourse conventions shift and change from one community to another. Focusing on one community, even one that has distinct sub-divisions, in combination with structured assignment goals helps to organize the course in a coherent way. By the end of the semester, students should have attained a relative comfort level with the discourse of the focal community or at least the sub-community with which they have spent time. "Community" in this sense can be interpreted broadly and imaginatively: you might focus your course on writing for the community of literary studies; the community of your city; the community of human rights activists; the community of your university; the community of voters in the upcoming presidential primary election. In other words, "community" can mean a group of people with common interests, conventions, or expectations. Learning to write for that community, students learn how to adjust their writing to accommodate interests, conventions, and expectations of their audience and their context.

3. Focusing on Writing Skills

You may decide to focus your course on selected general concerns of literacy education--such as audience, document design, research, revision, or critical reading. A single composition course cannot teach
Writing beyond the academy requires writers to consider audience, context, conventions, document design considerations, etc. Be sure to make a statement to this effect in your course description. Accounting for audience and context while writing may be very new to your students.

**Draw on Students' Established Expertise.** Regardless of your general approach to teaching non-academic writing, you should capitalize on the advantage that it offers you: all your students will bring expertise to the classroom. In planning your syllabus, you can draw explicitly on some of the ways that *The Call to Write* immediately taps into student knowledge:

1. "The Call to Write in Context," Chapter 1. This section describes the common knowledge that most people already have concerning a wide variety of writing and offers helpful introductory assignments. Though students have read and written in multiple contexts, they may not have consciously reflected on the expertise they have gained outside the composition classroom.

2. "Writing Inventories," Part 1. These writing exercises make day-to-day writing involvement explicit. Keeping inventories of their experiences with writing, students learn how much they already know about genres--including the academic essay.

3. "Literacy Narratives," Chapter 1. Here, too, students draw on and analyze their previous experiences with writing as they consider how writing works, how various it is, and how they can be engaged in it. Question #3 under the "Directions" section of the assignment lays a solid base for the types of analysis that students will be asked to do throughout the book. It focuses on key concepts such as participants in the writing act, contextual details, and the roles of writing. In this way, students become aware of writing as social action in their own lives.
"establishing, maintaining, or changing . . . relationships," "organizing cultural activities," and "maintaining or disrupting social institutions." See Chapter 7 of this Instructor's Manual for further discussion of literacy narratives.

4. Part 2. In Part 2, then, genres are illustrated as fulfilling active roles in communities, many of which are outside of the academy. Students are able to compare the models they see in this genre segment to the models they have recalled, discussed, and written about in the Part 1 inventories.

The following assignments represent a sequence used in an urban community-focused course. Students chose sub-communities such as arts and entertainment, politics, sports, and law enforcement toward the beginning of the semester. Their work for the remainder of the semester pertained to the discourse of their chosen communities, and they reviewed their peers' work in groups based on those communities. While elements of this assignment sequence are academically oriented or modeled, the intent of the ordering is to gradually move students from considering their roles within past communities toward learning about a particular community's issues and, finally, to engaging in those conversations.

Project 1: Community Memoir

"Writing memoirs, as the word itself suggests, involves memory-work. Memoirists draw on their past . . . in order to recreate, in written language, moments or episodes of lived experience. This recreation of particular experiences distinguishes memoirs from the genre of autobiographies, which seek to encompass an entire life instead. But memoirists don't just recreate moments of experience—they seek to imbue them with a significance readers will understand" (The Call to Write, Chapter 5). This community memoir seeks to connect you and your experiences to a particular community through an event, person, place, etc. As such, you should strive to recount an event that you can "imbue with a significance readers will understand" that clearly relates to the concept of community. You may choose a time you worked on a political campaign as a Young Republican, a time you participated in a missions trip through your church, a family occasion when you realized just what kinds of connections family can have, a connection you have had since moving to Fort Worth for school, or some other time.
Project 2: Interview Synthesis/Analysis

The interview synthesis/analysis is intended to be an introduction into the community you will be studying for the bulk of the semester. Here you should be focusing on a topic of interest within that community--something that challenges you and that is new to you--and you should be using a variety of research sources, including field research.

This essay should look much like traditional academic essays, including a topic statement (identifying the conflict) and supporting evidence, as well as the careful integration of any relevant sources. The interviews, surveys, and/or shadowing experiences should contribute to a deeper understanding of the topic: 1) Identify a single problem or conflict; 2) try to understand that problem from a number of angles; and 3) present the complexities of the problem by using evidence from written, verbal, and experiential sources.

At this point, you need not try to solve the conflict, but you should be able to convey it to your readers as clearly and completely as possible using your sources. In this sense, the essay is more like a report than a proposal (see The Call to Write, Chapters 8 and 10).

Format: See syllabus for general paper formatting. See Chapter 5, The Call to Write, for particular memoir guides.

Things to remember:
Choose your details carefully. Don't recount everything you remember about the event.
Even a story has organization. Consider how you want your readers to approach the event and lead them.
If you are having problems beginning, look back at the chapter models, choose some of the stylistic features that seem to work there, and try to adapt them to your story.
Remember to tie in your experience with community in some clear way in your memoir. The memoir should show interaction with a broader context than simply your own experience.

Goals: The primary goals of this essay are to get you thinking in a more in-depth way about your involvement in community, to allow you to experience the writing of a short memoir (literary nonfiction writing), possibly to lead you to a sub-community of interest for your later projects, and to practice the skills of narration and description.
Connections to previous assignments:
The narration skills you developed with Essay #1 may become helpful for this essay if you choose to include a story or anecdote to illustrate your topic. However, the paper as a whole should not be a narration.

Goals:
Move into the discourse of the community, identifying a conflict of interest and understanding the complexities of that conflict;
Use an interview/survey/shadowing opportunity effectively to find information not easily available in other sources;
Use the information from field work in conjunction with more traditional written sources to write an informative essay.

Project 3: Proposals
"Proposals put forth plans of action and seek to persuade readers that these plans should be implemented. . . . [P]roposals involve analyzing issues, taking a position, and making an argument" (The Call to Write Chapter 10). This project should follow from the research and analysis you have already done with the Interview project. You have already identified the pertinent issues, now step into the discussion, take a position, and offer a plan of action. You have complete latitude to choose the type of proposal you want to create, but you should make that decision deliberately. Which format is best for your particular call to write?

Include:
A cover page that states briefly who your audience is, why you've chosen the particular format for the proposal that you have, and any other information about the rhetorical situation you are entering that would help me understand your call to write;
A proposal;
A works cited or bibliography page, depending on the proposal format you choose (see below under Sources).
Goals: Your general goal in the proposal is to convince or persuade your audience to come a little closer to your view of the issue and even to act on that change of perspective. You may wish to consider and address any opposition, while presenting your side of the issue in as clear and convincing a way possible. Be sure to offer a plan of action.

Length: The essay should be 6 pages (or the equivalent) plus a works cited or works consulted page. Attachments are acceptable, but please format them so that they seem to be an integrated part of your document. Again, if you choose a non-academic model for your proposal, simply do the job well and you need not worry about length.

Sources: Any written sources, including those used for essay #2, if relevant; any interviews, surveys, or shadowing experiences; you will want to continue researching your topic.

If you are choosing a non-academic format for this project, you may not want a works cited page. However, a works consulted page of the sources that informed your work should be included separately.

Project 4: Collaborative Final Project

Collaboration is virtually a way of life and is especially relevant in communities. As we’ve discussed, collaboration can take many forms and can come at almost any stage of the writing process, not just at revision time. In this project, then, you will attempt to work collaboratively throughout the process to produce a single coherent document and presentation. Choose a topic within your sub-community and determine what major problem, issue, or conflict you wish to address. Go through the processes of planning, idea generation, organization, drafting, and revision together with your group. You may use any of the models of collaboration discussed in Chapter 13, "Working Together." Choose the model that best accomplishes your goals in the time allotted. The final product should reflect the work of 3-4 people. It should not be something easily accomplished by one person. I would recommend a proposal, a public document, or possibly an extended commentary as the genre for this final project. Select carefully!

Sections: One-page audience assessment (detailed) that describes your primary and secondary audiences and will count as page one of the paper; suggested equivalent of an eight-page paper (plus audience assessment = nine pages); Works cited or works consulted page; Any illustrative attachments, clearly marked (not required, but recommended).
Grading: Each group will receive two separate grades: one for the paper and one for the presentation. These will be averaged. I will be looking to see:

1. Whether you can work together effectively as a team, involving all members;
2. Whether you express yourselves well both orally and in writing;
3. Whether the written portion effectively and appropriately addresses the audience and conflict you have identified.

Sources: A collaborative project should reflect serious research. A few sources would not be adequate to understand the subject (presumably, you have already read a couple that will be appropriate). Of course, you may use books, articles, Internet resources, interviews, surveys and any other relevant resources. Remember the local focus of this course and use some local resources. Be sure to compile a complete bibliography early and divide up the reading or identify which sources you all should have read or consulted.

Things to remember: A good team usually has a point person. Try to designate the person early; he or she will be responsible for keeping track of your progress. (This is a division-of-labor model of collaboration.) Even though this is a collaborative project, you should maintain a clear focus and the written portion should be integrated and coherent.

Presentations: Each individual will have 5-10 minutes. Multimedia presentations are often most effective because visuals help to back up the verbal; feel free to bring relevant video clips, graphs, charts, etc. Groups should also try to engage the rest of the class in discussion. This may come in the form of an activity or questions.

Grading is made easier and fairer when teachers develop their grading criteria while they are designing the assignment. The following guidelines raise issues you should consider in assignment design:

Design focused assignments. Focus writing tasks by assigning a single situation for all students to address. For example, your campus may be having a debate concerning sexual preference. Ask the students to read the materials pertaining to this issue, have them research the student bylaws regarding
discrimination, and then ask them either to redraft those rules in light of the recent debate or have them create a similar text for a different type of organization. They will be able to use Chapter 6, "Public Documents," and Chapter 18, "Document Design," as guides for their work. This type of focused writing assignment allows students to work within the very clear restraints of a situation. The result should be more appropriate responses from them, as well as the opportunity for you to place those responses side by side for evaluation.

Choose assignment-specific grading criteria. Consider grading elements such as these: selection and adaptation of appropriate and effective format/design; use of appropriate word choices and tone for the audience and context; students' understanding of the debate they've entered as it is reflected in arguments, style, format, etc.; contribution to the situation (how does the text advance a conversation, redefine a community, explain an issue, etc.)

Include grading criteria in the assignment. Explicitly state what you will consider when assigning grades. To further refine the assignment, be very explicit about how you will evaluate the documents. This is true of all assigning, but you will find it especially helpful here, because the students will not be accustomed to being graded on non-academic writing.

Let the students guide your grading process. Let the students guide your grading process

Get students involved. Require each student to attach a cover sheet that explicitly states the purpose of the writing, the audience to which it is addressed, and why the format they chose is most appropriate to this particular call to write. Tell them you will read their cover sheets with those criteria in mind and will grade accordingly. In other words, if the format, content, language choice or other elements are inconsistent or inappropriate for the situations the students have designated, the grade will reflect the extent to which the text seems
to miss (or hit) its mark. This will prove particularly helpful if you allow the students to choose their own calls to write.

The preceding principles and models should serve you well as you design your composition course so that it features genres of non-academic writing. You will be pleased with how well non-academic writing instruction contributes to a writing workshop. Because all students have some experience and expertise in non-academic genres of writing, your classroom will more easily become a community of writers sharing expertise and learning from each other.

FOR FURTHER READING


Schutz, Aaron, and Anne Ruggles Gere. "Service Learning and English Studies: Rethinking 'Public' Service." *College English* 60.2 (February 1998): 129-49.


Wells, Susan. "Rogue Cops and Health Care: What Do We Want from Public Writing?" *College Composition and Communication* 47.3 (October 1996): 325-41.
CHAPTER 4

Teaching the Ethics of Writing

*The writer, as he writes, is making ethical decisions. He doesn't test his words by a rule book, but by life.*

Donald Murray

THINKING ABOUT THE ETHICS OF WRITING

"Ethics" is not a hypothetical activity involving imaginary dilemmas in unspecified locations. Ethics speaks to the relationships and responsibilities writers invoke when they act in daily life through language. The nature of ethical relationships and responsibilities among writers and families, communities, and cultures is a deeply important and exciting theme in *The Call to Write*. This theme is developed throughout the text in the "Ethics of Writing" sections of each chapter. These sections are not intended to be formulas or codes used to judge a writer's appropriate and inappropriate behaviors; rather, the "Ethics of Writing" sections are intended to be invitational, encouraging students to participate in forming important questions and negotiating solutions.

TEACHING THE ETHICS OF WRITING

Some of the categories in which *The Call to Write* addresses the ethics of writing are familiar ones, e.g., plagiarism and collaboration. Others, however, raise new ethical issues that your students may not be accustomed to addressing, such as the ethics of letter-writing. As you plan your syllabus to account for the ethics of writing, you may want to consider in advance how you will approach the ethical questions raised in the chapters. Here we offer assignment possibilities as well as suggestions for in-class discussion connected with many of the chapters in *The Call to Write*. 

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Part 1, The Call to Write, “Writing and Reading

Chapter 1, "The Call to Write in Context"

This chapter raises one of the most obvious issues regarding the ethics of writing: cheating. In line with the book's theme of civic participation and responsibility, The Call to Write justifies the argument against cheating on social grounds: "Cheating is ethically wrong because it makes it impossible for people to cooperate with each other and to negotiate the differences that divide them." Will students find this argument compelling? What, exactly, is The Call to Write suggesting? What are some of the differences that divide people, and how does cheating make those differences more difficult?

When students begin to understand that academic dishonesty is more than just the teacher's and the administrator's responsibility, they may be more inclined to take an active role in speaking out against it. When students inquire into the unhealthy ethical relationships created by plagiarism and other forms of cheating, they may be more inclined to think about their responsibilities. If you keep in mind that only a very small fraction of students do cheat, you can prevent the discussion of cheating from falling into admonitions and defenses.

Sample Discussion: A Plagiarism Policy

The following is the plagiarism policy for writing workshops at Texas Christian University, 1998-1999. Among the distinctions to consider with students is the difference between plagiarism and patchwriting. When writers confront new and difficult material, they sometimes patchwrite in an effort to get comfortable with new vocabularies, and a careful distinction must be drawn between this patchwriting and plagiarism. The issue of how students confront difficult material might also be approached by asking students to read the "Ethics of Writing: Boredom and Persistence" section in Chapter 2, "Reading and Writing: The Critical Connection."
Patchwriting: When following the language of a source text, students are expected to use fresh words and fresh sentence structures. Inadequate paraphrase customarily results in a lowered grade for the paper and may also result in a required ungraded revision.

Academic misconduct: The Department of English expects its students to adhere to the university's code of student conduct, especially as it pertains to academic misconduct. (For the university's policies on academic misconduct, see §3.4 of the Code of Student Conduct, which is reproduced in the TCU Calendar Handbook.) The following explanations and departmental policies are intended to help students interpret the university's code as it applies to work in English classes:

Ghostwritten papers: In English classes, ghostwriting is defined as the appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. The unacknowledged use of "study guides" such as Cliffs Notes or Monarch Notes in the preparation of English papers is a form of ghostwriting. (Even when acknowledged, such study guides are too rudimentary to be appropriate secondary sources for a college paper, and thus will typically result in a reduced grade for the paper. Students wishing help in interpreting a literary source should consult the instructor for some suggested interpretive readings.) Cases of ghostwriting will be referred to the Dean of the AddRan College of Arts and Sciences with the recommendation that the student be removed from the course with a grade of "F."

Insufficient citation: Quotations or paraphrase from another's work requires citation, and direct quotations also require quotation marks. (See Little, Brown Compact Handbook, §49c.) Papers that quote or paraphrase without citation and papers that quote directly without supplying quotation marks may receive a range of responses, including a reduced grade; a required, ungraded revision; an "F" for
the paper; or the recommendation to the Dean of the AddRan College of Arts and Sciences that the student be removed from the course with a grade of "F."

**Unacknowledged collaboration:** Students are expected to cite both written and oral sources; when others (tutors, classmates, friends, etc.) collaborate on their papers, the author of record should acknowledge those collaborators' contributions. Papers that do not cite or acknowledge oral collaboration will be classified as inadequately cited papers and will be subject to the same range of penalties.

A brief reading of your own school's plagiarism policy, or a brief lecture explaining the minutiae of intentional and unintentional plagiarism, may be quite useful, but it will more than likely fail to engage many of the deeper issues behind cheating and behind a climate of peer pressure that leads to looking the other way when cheating occurs. Students are themselves a great resource of ethical discussion, and you can engage that resource by asking specific questions about the ethics of circulating last semester's term papers and the ethics of calling the 1-800-we'll-express-mail-it-to-you hotlines or websites.

**More Discussion Starters for Chapter 1**

If a student, while peer reviewing an essay, comes to believe that the essay is plagiarized, should this student report his or her suspicions to the teacher? What sorts of things need to be taken into account before the student makes a decision?

What motivates students to cheat?

Exactly how, in detail, is cheating irresponsible to the rest of the class and the rest of the student body?
What should a university and a specific class do to address the problem?

**Sample Assignment**

Divide into small groups and, using an assigned source, paraphrase or summarize that source responsibly; compose a plagiarized version of the source; and compose a patchwritten version. When the entire class reconvenes, use these samples to differentiate the three types of writing and to discuss the ethical issues involved in them.

**Chapter 3, "Persuasion and Responsibility"**

Responsible argumentation requires responding to others, not simply talking at or past others. *The Call to Write* asks us to think about argument as a particular type of persuasion writers and speakers turn to when they have "reasonable disagreements" about issues that face them. This understanding of argument as a situation involving reasonable differences carries important ethical implications. Genuine argument, as opposed to the shouting match, carries with it the idea that the participants will work to clarify and understand differences as a part of the arguing process.

**Discussion Starters**

In the introduction to Chapter 3, *The Call to Write* offers four examples of situations that call for argument. Ask students to outline some of the ethical issues that might come up in one or all of the cases.

**Sample Assignments**

Ask students to find an advertisement that persuades in an ethically questionable way. Ask students to find another advertisement for the same kind of product that persuades in a more responsible way. During small group discussions in class, students might formulate
some general guidelines about what makes persuasion ethical or unethical. More than likely, our students will bring up reason and emotion, which gives us a good opportunity to look at The Call to Write's discussion of ethos, pathos, and logos in the chapter.

Ask students to characterize the ethos, pathos, and logos in the letters written by Darcy Peters and Marcus Boldt. Boldt's letter tends toward a more logical tone, while Peters' letter tends toward a more emotional tone.

Ask students to characterize the ethos of each of the writers and to point to specific words, phrases, and images that help to create the ethos. This assignment will also be productive as a part of Chapter 4, "Letters."

**Part 2, The Call to Write, "Writing Projects"

The Call to Write describes genres as "ways of acting in the world." Writers work through various genres in order to influence community policy, public opinion, personal relationships, and cultural trends. The text assumes that teachers will raise broad ethical issues such as treating other people with respect, being truthful, avoiding mean-spirited personal attacks, and avoiding shallow stereotyping. In addition to these essential ethical topics, the book offers you an opportunity to ask more specific ethical questions about the relationships and responsibilities invoked by each of the genre's unique expectations and constraints.

In each of the genres, writers confront different kinds of ethical issues, invoke different audiences, and accept different ethical expectations and constraints. In a report, for example, the writer is obliged to clarify an issue as fair-mindedly as possible by taking into account as many of the relevant facts and statistics as possible. The author of a review, however, is not under the same strict obligation. A review is often more partisan in its expectations, especially reviews of movies, plays, musical performances, and restaurants. By virtue of the genre, the reviewer is not under the same obligation that the reporter is in clarifying facts. The reviewer need not account for every
aspect of a performance, for example. At the same time, a reviewer faces other specific and practical ethical issues. A reviewer might have to decide whether to "go easy" on a performance in which the reviewer has a friend, spouse, or patron. Should the reviewer even write in such a circumstance?

Each genre offers opportunities to pose ethical questions about what sort of writing and reading activities are appropriate under the given expectations and limitations.

Chapter 4, "Letters"

In the introduction to the chapter, *The Call to Write* describes letters as being "crucial to a democratic society." The free correspondence of ideas and feelings is vital to a thriving democracy, and the genre of the letter, more so than any other genre, participates in this freedom. Letters establish and maintain relationships with friends, spouses, communities, and cultures. From the famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King, Jr., to personal love letters, the genre varies wildly, but the underlying idea of connecting with others in an often personal way remains essential.

Discussion Starters

Is e-mail as authentic as handwritten mail? Is a handwritten letter more authentic than a typed letter? Issues of authenticity speak to the ethos--the authority and credibility--of the letter writer. Ethos plays a key role in the ethics of corresponding, and with the increasing popularity of e-mailing, an important question to raise is whether electronic correspondence--and the technological revolution in communication in general--increases or decreases authenticity and intimacy.

Letter-writing has a long history of etiquette, and one way to get into the ethics of letters is to discuss the difference between etiquette and ethics. While forgetting to address someone properly in a business letter might be seen as a breach of etiquette, it is seldom considered unethical. Stereotyping or sexist language in a business letter,
however, would constitute a breach of both etiquette and ethics. How should writers go about distinguishing between etiquette and ethics? What are some key considerations in making this distinction?

Have you ever received an inappropriate form letter? What issues govern the ethics of the genre? Sometimes they are necessary. At the same time, questions about how they construct certain kinds of readers (form readers?) might lead to productive conversations about how other types of letters construct more personal readers. The letter is a great genre for us to use to explore the ethics of shaping a reader.

Sample Assignments

The two letters of application in the argument, persuasion, and responsibility chapter offer an opportunity to talk with your students about ethos. Read these two letters and identify specific phrases and images that give the reader a sense of the writer's values and attitudes.

In the "Ethics of Writing" section of Chapter 4, The Call to Write provides Carnegie Mellon's Internet issues website, a useful online source containing readings about current ethical issues in cyberspace: http://eng.lss.cmu.edu/Internet/. Visit the site and bring back some information on ethics and cyberspace that you consider intriguing or controversial.

Chapter 5, "Memoirs"

Although memoirs are most often aimed at self-discovery, they are also written for a public audience and therefore assume public responsibilities. The Call to Write raises the following key ethical questions in relation to the genre:
What are the memoirist's responsibilities to those people he or she writes about?

What are the memoirist's responsibilities to himself or herself?

To what extent is the writer obligated to be fair and truthful about the events and people involved?

Because memoirs can deal with complex, difficult, and painful situations, there is no simple formula to discuss the memoirist's responsibilities to the self and to others. In recalling a terrible or maybe embarrassing experience, for example, the memoirist might rightly avoid disclosing certain facts. At the same time, it would be remiss (and possibly willfully misleading, given the ethical expectations of the genre) if he or she conveniently forgets or ignores or changes essential information.

With the decision to write a memoir comes the ethical expectation that a writer will go beyond a shallow retelling of events. A memoir requires engaged and honest self-reflection, and so students embarking upon memoir writing might be advised to think about the rigorous expectations of self-reflection that accompany the genre.

**Discussion Starters**

If a memoirist becomes overly self-indulgent, has he or she broken an ethical contract with the audience? Or, since memoirs are of a personal nature, should the reader be expected to tolerate a certain degree of self-indulgence? How much? How many soapboxes, for example, can the memoirist stand upon before the reader has been placed in an unfair position?

Are the memoirist's feelings more vulnerable than those of the commentator? Do peer reviewers need to be especially sensitive when commenting upon memoirs? The "Ethics of Writing" section in Chapter 5 provides students with an especially detailed set of
questions about the relationships and responsibilities between the writer and characters upon which the memoirist reflects.

**Sample Assignment**

Write a brief memoir paragraph (or two) from the perspective of a fictional character who saw or attended an interesting historical event. In addition, try to imagine and note some of the ethical considerations that might go through the character's mind as he or she is re-telling the story.

**Chapter 6, "Public Documents"**

Public documents articulate principles and procedures that serve to codify the beliefs and practices of a culture, a community, a family, an organization, and other groups who share mutual concerns. From the simple arrangement of a college identification card to the thousands of tiny words on the bottom of rental agreements, the ethics of public documents involves a wide range of quandaries.

Some of the recent commercials promoting the Internet depict cyberspace as a utopian place where everything goes well. One of the more engaging questions *The Call to Write* asks about cyberspace comes in the "Ethics of Writing" section of Chapter 6: "Are there ways in which the new media may restrict democratic participation?" Follow-up questions might include the following: Is cyberspace corporate space? Civic space? Both? Sometimes both? These questions lead to further questions about access to cyberspace, about the ethics of visiting a chat room, or a web page, and so forth.

Writing in cyberspace often offers the possibility of anonymity, where writers can use nicknames or imaginary pseudonyms. Such creative role-playing might be entertaining in many cases, but such role-playing does not erase the deeper agency of the writer involved. If a character in a novel makes an egregious remark, readers usually assume that the author is using the character's unethical communication to illustrate a significant theme. How does and doesn't a "nickname" in cyberspace function in light of such
an example? The ethics of role-playing in cyberspace is an excellent starting point for discussions about self-representation in writing and about whether anonymity changes the ethical obligations one has to one's self and to one's community and family.

In the "Ethics of Writing" section of Chapter 6, The Call to Write asks if we can imagine ways in which new media (most notably the Internet) might heighten democracy. The freedom of information and access to that information become key issues. Also, the legitimacy of information on the web is a profound ethical topic worth discussing at some point.

In addition to more theoretical questions about the nature of authorship and how the Internet changes notions of the writer, The Call to Write reminds readers of far more straightforward online protocols in the "Going Online" discussions throughout the book. These protocols include the idea that our students need to secure permission before forwarding an e-mail message and secure permission before adding someone to an e-mailing list, newsgroup, or the like.
Discussion Starters

Should public libraries and high schools put filters in online computers so that underage people do not have the possibility of access to controversial and unethical websites?

Should schools spend more money on technology? Do schools spend too much money on technology? What sort of ethical and financial commitments are involved (both in the present and in the future) when a school buys 20 new computers? How should these commitments be weighed against other ethical concerns in the classroom-teacher-to-student ratios, for example?

In what way is a cyberspace chat room similar to a common area in a student union, or a lobby of a business office? In what way is it not? Are both kinds of spaces subject to the same general ethical codes? Is sexual harassment in cyberspace, for example, the same type of thing that it is in regular space?

Is it ethical to ask people to sign a document that only the most subtle of lawyers can read accurately? Consider both academic and non-academic discourse, the ethical and unethical use of jargon, and the nature of professionalization in general.

Sample Assignments

Examine a public document that is outdated for ethical reasons. A document codifying the belief that women should not vote would be a good example, or some other document that is obviously codifying beliefs that are outdated. Then find a current public document that you believe will be outdated in 20 years for ethical reasons.

Find a company's sexual harassment policy or code of ethics. Bring in the school's student code of conduct, or try to find a copy of the
school sexual harassment policy. Examine the tone, structure, and vocabulary of these documents.

Research the history and current anti-trust controversies surrounding Microsoft and its competitors. What are the main issues involved? What is at stake for the general public?

Chapter 7, "Profiles" Chapter 7, "Profiles"Chapter 7, "Profiles" Chapter 7, "Profiles" Chapter 7, "Profiles"

In many respects, the profile is a collaboration between the writer and the subject being profiled. The extent to which both participate in decisions about what information to include is often a matter for negotiation. Profiles create dominant impressions, which include impressions of the values and ethical attitudes of the person being profiled. The writer is responsible for representing those values fairly, so the writer must pay careful attention to the ethical connotations of descriptive terms and phrases. The example profile of Molly O'Neil in Chapter 7 highlights the ways in which writers establish the ethos of the person being profiled. Point out specific phrases and images that create O'Neil's ethos.

The ethics of interviewing might be important to discuss while teaching the profile chapter, especially, and obviously, if an assignment option involves an interview. What are appropriate and inappropriate questions? Are some questions too personal? What are some examples of loaded and leading questions, both of which are discussed in the field research section of the "Guide to Research" (Part 4)? In the case of leading questions, political polling might be raised as an issue, anticipating the public documents chapter.
Discussion Starter

Should the profiler reveal potentially embarrassing information about the subject without his or her permission? Suppose, for example, that during the course of profiling a public official, the writer discovers that the figure has a skeleton of some sort in the closet that has not been disclosed. What is the profiler's responsibility to the audience? What is the profiler's responsibility to the subject?

Sample Assignment

Sketch a profile of a classmate. Through specific images and phrases, capture some of the important values held by your classmate.

Create a guideline that distinguishes between appropriate and inappropriate questions during an interview.

As a creative in-class assignment, write a profile paragraph of the "form reader" who is constructed by a form letter.

Chapter 8, "Fact Sheets and FAQs, Brochures, and Websites"

The purpose of the many genres in Chapter 8 is to inform an audience and to clarify an issue through the use of various methods of research, including statistical research. A responsible presentation of information must take into account all of the information available. The reporting on some of the early research done on the health effects of smoking comes to mind as a good example of the dubious omission of a broad range of statistics, facts, and probabilities. A great way to introduce the topic of ethics and research is to ask our students to read the two "Ethics of Writing" sections in the book's "Guide to Research."
The ethics of organizing information in the report might be considered in conjunction with the chapter on document design. Since the chapter on document design does not have an "Ethics of Writing" section, students might be encouraged to write such a section during a small group activity in class.

**Discussion Starters**

Chapter 8 raises the issue about reliable and unreliable sources, especially sources taken off of the Internet. Given that we are living in an information age, an age in which more information is available for most kinds of reports than might ever be read or used, how can a writer best choose sources?

Do you agree with *The Call to Write*’s analysis of the Living Wage FAQ? What other ethical issues are imbedded in the document that the text does not address?

**Sample Assignment**

Reorganize the FAQ on the living wage in a way that emphasizes and foregrounds different aspects of the information. Then describe the shift in the report's ethical implications as a result of the reorganization.

**Chapter 9, "Commentary"**

The purpose of commentary is to make sense of events, trends, and ideas. Commentators help to shape the public's conceptions of issues, including the differences that divide people. The commentator rarely, if ever, speaks just for the commentator's sake; commentary is more than the expression of a personal opinion. Commentary is an effort to find or create a pattern of meaning in which a public participates, and, in this sense, the commentator and the audience participate in the shared ethical responsibilities and consequences of shaping meaning. For example, the commentator who
peddles hate and stereotyping is open to ethical critique in addition to logical critique.

**Discussion Starters**

*The Call to Write* mentions in the opening paragraphs of the chapter that the focus of the news has shifted away from the "news itself" to commentator's analysis and interpretation of the news. Consider how the media has changed over the past ten years. What are the ethical issues involved in sensationalism? Do "more important" stories get dropped sometimes because they will not sell as well as more trivial stories? Who should decide what an important story is? What might *The Call to Write* mean by the "news itself"?

In the chapter's "Ethics of Writing" section, *The Call to Write* says that commentators "need to examine their own assumptions about who is included in the public and try to understand how the people they write about perceive themselves and their experience." What sort of specific issues come to mind when you read this? For example, reading *The Call to Write*, how do you believe John Trimbur perceives himself as an author of the textbook?

**Sample Assignments**

Offer a commentary upon the commentary chapter. What sorts of values does *The Call to Write* consider important throughout Chapter 9?

Offer a commentary upon *The Call to Write*. What sorts of values does it consider important?

**Chapter 10, "Proposals"**

Because a proposal is an overtly persuasive text, you might start by reminding your students of the responsibility aspect of "Persuasion and
Responsibility” (Chapter 3). In Chapter 10, *The Call to Write* raises three additional important ethical questions:

- Does the proposal take into account the practical issues surrounding implementation, including budgetary constraints?
- Does the proposal consider alternative possibilities?
- Does the proposal address significant objections?

Proposals define problems in ways that make solutions possible. Proposals must weigh carefully the multiplicity of effects of any given action, especially actions on the level of policy, and this requires serious inquiries into all of the different groups of people who will be affected if the proposal is implemented.

**Discussion Starter**

The chapter's proposal “Let Teenagers Try Adulthood” is an especially controversial example of a proposal. Reflect upon whether Leon Botstein’s argument is ethical. Does it take into consideration the potentially negative consequences if the proposal is taken seriously? Is the proposal intentionally hyperbolic? If you could collaborate with Botstein, what sort of agreements and disagreements would occur?

**Sample Assignment**

Write a proposal on the issue of the education of teenagers that takes into account Botstein's proposal.

**Chapter 11, "Reviews"**

Reviews have important and often immediate consequences. A negative review of a dance performance may severely limit the future audience of the
performance, even if the performance was seen during an "off" night. Is this fair? To what extent should the reviewer worry about such consequences? To whom is the reviewer responsible? A negative review of a restaurant may cost the establishment thousands of dollars in commerce. Reviewing is also a partisan activity; the perspective, personality, and ethical character of the reviewer are key elements that must not be erased or minimized.

**Discussion Starters**

Is a review of a product commissioned by its maker *necessarily* less credible than an independent review? Why or why not? In reaching your answer, take account of the audience's expectations and social context.

Should a reviewer "go easy" on a friend's performance? Why or why not? Such a question leads to questions about the ethics of peer review in a writing classroom. In what circumstances is it ethically responsible to soften criticism?

**Sample Assignment**

Point to phrases and images that establish the ethical character and credibility of the reviewer. What distinction would you make between establishing expertise and establishing moral credibility?

**Chapter 13, "Collaboration"**

Tensions are bound to occur when people work together under pressure. This is human nature, and this is why in the "Ethics of Collaboration" section of "Writers at Work" *The Call to Write* emphasizes that productive collaboration depends upon establishing good relationships so that open and meaningful communication will occur. Good relationships allow for disagreements to be productive. *The Call to Write* emphasizes three important and practical points for students to keep in mind when working on a collaborative writing project:
Group members must provide each other with legible working drafts in a timely manner.

Group members bear the responsibility of offering each other direct, honest assessment of work.

Group members need to understand their responsibilities to each other when they disagree. How the group finds workable solutions to tensions, disagreements, and differences will play a major role in the success or failure of collaborative projects.

Maintaining clear and honest paths of communication among group members and with teachers will create a supportive environment capable of negotiating inevitable disagreements.

Chapter 6 of this Manual offers practical steps to take and important distinctions to clarify before assigning a collaborative project. Although groups should be strongly encouraged to solve their own disagreements, a clear policy for dealing with deep and unsolvable problems should be in place, as well--before the project begins. Such a policy might include one or all of the following: a provisional plan to reassign particular group members; a confidential form upon which group members can explain the problem to the teacher; and a clearly articulated departmental policy for dealing with potential complaints about the grading of collaborative projects.

**Sample Assignment**

Work with your group to draft a set of flexible but specific procedures on how you will deal with any differences and disagreements that may arise during the collaborative process. Give a copy of the procedures to each group member and to your teacher.

**Part 6, The Call to Write, "Guide to Editing"**
Commas, run-on sentences, sentences that are too wordy, misplaced modifiers, and the like usually come to mind when the class considers the editing stage of the writing process. *The Call to Write* provides two "Ethics of Writing" sections in Chapter 22 that go beyond these familiar editorial concerns. Editing is more than a rote mechanical activity--a point worth emphasizing, again and again. Here are a few of the ethical concerns you might ask your students to think about while editing and peer reviewing; hence the following suggestions apply to their work in Chapter 12, "Case Study of a Writing Assignment," as well as in Part 6, "Guide to Editing":

In the text you are reviewing or editing, is jargon used irresponsibly to confuse the reader or to avoid a coherent explanation?

In the text you are reviewing or editing, does the writer "doublespeak"? One of *The Call to Write*'s more entertaining examples is the description of bad handwriting as "deficient grapho-motor skills."

In the text you are reviewing or editing, does the writer use inappropriate language with respect to race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or social class?

**Sample assignments**

Find examples of irresponsible uses of jargon and/or doublespeak while reading newspapers, watching news programs, looking at commercials and advertisements, or listening to people speak.

In the second "Ethics of Writing" section in Part 6, *The Call to Write* points out that referring to women as "the ladies" or "the girls" often trivializes women and therefore should be avoided. Is this a universal truth? Does *The Call to Write* intend it to be a universal truth, or are there contexts in which the uses of these phrases might not connote sexism? In answering this question, you must think about the role of context in ethical decisions.
As a collaborative exercise in class, form small groups and create a code of ethics for peer reviewing.

*The Call to Write* offers you the opportunity to treat ethics not as an isolated issue nor as the concern of a few special people, but as an integral part of one's writing life. Drawing on the commentary and models in this chapter, you can design your course so that it not only teaches writing skills and attitudes but also teaches the responsibilities of the writer.

**FOR FURTHER READING**

CCCC Ad Hoc Committee on the Ethical Use of Students and Student Writing in Composition Studies. “Guidelines for the Ethical Treatment of Students and Student Writing in Composition Studies.” *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* 28.4 (May 2001): 429-432.


CHAPTER 5

Teaching Invention and Planning

Invention builds on a foundation of knowledge accumulated from previous generations, knowledge that constitutes a social legacy of ideas, forms, and ways of thinking.

Karen Burke LeFevre

THINKING ABOUT INVENTION AND PLANNING

When writing teachers talk about invention and planning, they are really talking about prewriting--everything that happens before the student actually begins to write a paper, from brainstorming a topic to planning research in the library. The writer makes decisions about subject matter, about purpose, about audience--even when the teacher specifies them. Planning is as important as invention in the writing process. Writers choose the method of research; they plan the schedule for such research; they plan the construction of their paper; they take responsibility for their writing process; they create a product, and they begin to "own" their writing.

Invention and planning are integral to a successful writing experience but are sometimes difficult concepts to teach because many students are unfamiliar with these notions. Too often, students are called to write only by panic and desperation the night before an assignment is due. In these circumstances, invention and planning are denied their rightful place in the writing process.

TEACHING INVENTION AND PLANNING

Parts 1 and 2 of The Call to Write lead students through the process of invention and planning. Prewriting exercises, which include prompts for thinking about readings, discussion of readings, and short individual and group projects, are all designed to show students ways to negotiate the invention and planning stages of writing.
Each chapter in Part 2 includes a detailed account of procedures for genre-specific invention and planning. Each writing assignment in Part 2 begins with specific invention and planning questions, which help students invent options for the writing assignment, and plan how they might construct the document, from placement of information to overall design. In each chapter, the invention and planning stages are closely aligned; both work together to launch a writing project.

Chapters 12 and 13, the first two chapters in Part 3, are all about inventing and planning a writing experience. If you wish to emphasize invention and planning in your writing course, you can use these chapters in conjunction with the early chapters in Part 1 and the genre chapters in Part 2 (more on this later).

The introduction to Part 3 is important, because it explains basic elements of the writing process: invention, planning, drafting, peer commentary, revising, and manuscript preparation. The writing inventories that follow explanations of each of these elements are a fine way to get students thinking and talking about how they have managed writing tasks in the past and how they might manage them now or in the future. It may be helpful to equate the invention and planning stages of writing to building a house. One can't build the roof before the floors or walls are constructed. Having a map by which to proceed will turn writing from a catastrophic and impenetrable mystery into a manageable and pleasurable task.

Following the introduction to Part 3, Chapter 12 offers a case study of writing assignment and divides that case study into parts, which demonstrate the means by which your students can plan their approach to an individual writing project:

- Invention
- Writing Assignment
- Planning
- Drafting
- Peer Commentary
- Revising
Final Touches

Chapter 12 also offers advice about how students can talk to teachers about writing and get aid from a Writing Center. By going through a sample process, students will learn about the procedure necessary for writing a paper in any genre.

An essential element of a group writing experience is planning. Chapter 13 of *The Call to Write* (which Chapter 6 of this Manual discusses in detail) helps students prepare for, find a topic for, and plan a group project. Chapter 13 of *The Call to Write* offers an example of a Task Breakdown Chart, which shows how a group can manage a large project. Such a chart, sometimes called a Gantt chart, is "especially useful for planning collaborative projects because it shows how tasks relate to each other." Indeed, the entire chapter is a manual for planning collaborative work--from a discussion of group size, to suggestions for project topics, to online collaboration.

Ideas and paths to invention (and then planning) all come together in each genre chapter. It’s hard for students to plan a writing project if they aren’t sure what needs to be said, to whom, or how. The invention and planning material in each genre chapter is reinforced by writing samples, analyses, and critical inquiries.

Introductions for each chapter delineate the kinds of writing inherent in the genre and general purpose of the genre. Examples of the genre then demonstrate various ways writing can happen within a genre. Each of the writing samples is, in turn, followed by a brief analysis section, a discussion of the sample, and a critical inquiry series of questions that help students identify audience and purpose, and lead them into invention.

For example, the first writing sample in Chapter 6, "Public Documents: Codifying Beliefs and Practices," is an excerpt from *My Own Country*, a book by Abraham Verghese that recounts his experiences as a doctor working with AIDS patients. Immediately following is the section entitled "ANALYSIS: Defining Legal Responsibility." *The Call to Write* uses this
analysis to point out salient points in the selection. After this comes the
"Critical Inquiry." This series of questions asks students to analyze the text
so that they can consider issues of content as well as construction. They can
then use similar questions in the invention of their own calls to write. By the
time they get to the "Invention" section of each chapter, they are already
working toward possible topics.

The Invention section of each chapter offers students direction for
finding a paper topic. As in the planning (and revising) portions of the
genre chapters, the information in the invention sections isn't necessarily
exclusive to the genre. The last thing The Call to Write advises students to
do in the introduction to Part 2 is this: "You may want to consult chapters
you haven't been assigned for advice about writing tasks you face in and out
of school."

When you assign a topic for a report, such as "Violence in Our
Schools," you are participating in invention. You have decided on the
genre (reporting) and the topic (violence in our schools). The students must
then choose how they will narrow the topic, who the audience will be, and
what purpose the report will serve. Sometimes taking the invention process
partially out of students' hands will assuage feelings of desperation when
they can't choose between one huge topic or another. Also, if your class is
constructed around a theme, you may want to couple topics with genres and
then let students invent from there. For example, if you teach a "Writing
about Art" class, you can stress certain genres and pair them with a large
topic students may narrow: a review (of a museum or gallery exhibit), a
commentary (on emerging trends in art), a report (on art, artists, and
government funding), a proposal (for local fund-raising efforts to bring more
art into the community), or a profile (of a local artist).

Students need models of planning. For lack of planning skills, many leave
their work to be done until the last minute. The Call to Write teaches
planning even to students whose fear of writing is manifest in statements
such as "I don't know what to say" and "Tell me what you want me to do." Students who learn to plan with confidence can transfer that self-possession
to their writing for your course and beyond.
Each genre chapter presents steps for learning and practicing planning, integrated into the writing process. For example, Chapter 7, "Profiles: Creating a Dominant Impression," offers a gradual introduction to the profile genre; then sample assignments; and, with every new step, exercises meant to reinforce the learning. The chapter proceeds through these sections:

- Introduction: Thinking About the Genre
- Exploring Your Experience
- Readings (sample readings, with analyses and critical inquiries)
- Visual Design (sample, with analysis of design elements)
- Looking at the Genre (exercises for further exploration)
- Writing Assignments
- Invention (with exercises)
- Clarifying Your Purpose (with exercises)
- Researching Your Subject (with exercises)

For the purposes of this section on planning the next part of the chapter is vital:

- Planning
- Working Draft

Next come these sections:

- Peer Commentary
- Revising

Following the three sections immediately above is an example of a writer's workshop and questions that could be asked during a workshop. The chapter ends, as do all the genre chapters in Part 2, with a "Writer's Inventory" and a "Closing Note. The Closing Note helps students consider further ideas about their forays into the genre.

If planning is a skill that your students particularly need to study, you can give special emphasis to that section of each chapter.
Use Your Own Writing as a Model of Planning. Describe your own invention and planning experiences with students. Share a piece of your writing, like the syllabus. You may find it useful to talk about the way you plan to write your syllabus long before it's due. Talk to the students about how you decide what to teach: which books, which chapters, in what order. As you review the plan for the class, you can elaborate upon the ways that you write, the elements you must consider. If the syllabus is decided upon by a committee, you and the class can reconstruct the rationale for its invention and construction.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, teachers consider the following in syllabus preparation:

**Purpose**
- Goals for each assignment
- How assignments flow or work together
- Goals for the term

**Assertions**
- University/college rules
- Department rules
- Course rules and procedures

**Audience**
- Assumptions about preparedness for course
- Assumptions about preparedness for each class
- Responsibilities of students
- Responsibilities to students

Discussing the composition of your syllabus allows students to see that you had to plan and compose it well in advance of the first day of class, to allow for committee or departmental approval; for timely photocopying; for peer commentary; and for revision. It's also useful for you to talk about the times when you've been underprepared and thrown a syllabus together with little thought or at the last minute. You may be able to talk about the confusion
your students felt at reading a syllabus that was given to them late or that was unclear or incomplete.

As a follow-up exercise, you can ask the class to preview (a reading strategy explained in Chapter 2) *The Call to Write* in order to construct an alternative syllabus. For a short paper or journal entry, they can also write a literacy narrative about the experience. (See Chapter 7 of this manual for more details on teaching literacy narratives.) Knowing that you might, in the next term, use their ideas in a revised syllabus will make the exercise vivid and meaningful.

**Students respond positively to teachers who practice what they preach.** You may want to share some of your other writing projects with students (if the content isn't too sensitive). Personal or professional letters; memos; notes taken to prepare for class; laundry lists; and invitations can all be useful for talking about your own writing process and specifically your planning. Showing them a variety of your writing tasks will allow discussion about how you plan differently for different audiences. For example, when you write a personal letter there may be very little planning involved, but for a formal, professional letter, more planning is not just appropriate but necessary. All letters, though, are planned according to audience, purpose, content, and presentation. Letting students know in positive, concrete ways that you are practicing the same thing you are teaching them can be a powerful teaching tool.

**Use *The Call to Write* as a Model of Planning.** Show the class how each chapter is organized, how assignments follow examples, how the three parts of the text work together. Ask them to speculate about why John Trimbur might have organized the genre chapters the way he did; to think of other ways in which he might have organized the book; and to consider the amount of planning that might have gone into such a long "paper." Such an exercise demonstrates that the techniques for writing taught in *The Call to Write* were used to construct *The Call to Write*. (Using Chapter 11, you may then want to assign a review of the book.)
Make Audience and Purpose a Part of Planning. As your class begins work on a writing assignment, engage students in a discussion of who (besides you) the reader will be. Making the audience real doesn't alleviate student obsession with grades, but it does make the writing real in ways writing only for the teacher does not. Help the class understand that planning for audience must be a significant part of what and how they write. (Again, this is a place where planning and invention work together.)

When a writer (student or otherwise) is called to write, the audience must be part of that call, but so is purpose; both are integral to planning. Identifying the purpose of writing helps students to decide what results they hope the text will elicit. Grades are certainly an ingrained and traditional part of purpose, but when the audience is real, the purpose moves beyond good grades to effective writing. Throughout the text, The Call to Write offers suggestions for determining audience and purpose.

Use the following invention assignments:

Using the text

1. After you have read the Invention section of a Part 2 chapter, work in small groups to do one of the exercises.

2. When the entire class reconvenes, listen to the reports of each small group. Notice the similarities and differences in those findings.

3. In discussion with the rest of your classmates, consider what the similarities and differences between small groups' work on the assigned exercise suggests for the role of invention in the your future writing.

How you use the invention portion of the genre chapters will depend upon the sort of writing project you assign for that chapter. By working together or individually through several of the invention
exercises, though, students should be able to create their own paths for proceeding on to the planning phase.

**Supplemental activities**

Work in pairs or small groups to decide what they might like to say in a letter to a famous person, in a profile of a famous person, in a review of a movie, or in a public document to prevent campus crime. (Be genre-specific if students are working in a particular chapter in Part 2.)

Choose, first in small groups, then as a class, the topic for a book or chapter in a book students would write as a class.

Invent an additional chapter for *The Call to Write*.

**Use the following planning assignments:**

**Using the text**

1. After you have read the Planning section of a Part 2 chapter, work in small groups to do one of the exercises.

2. When the entire class reconvenes, listen to the reports of each small group. Notice the similarities and differences in those findings.

3. In discussion with the rest of your classmates, consider what the similarities and differences between small groups' work on the assigned exercise suggests for the role of planning in the your future writing.
**Supplemental activities**

Plan a manual on how to be a college student.

Plan a syllabus for teaching extra-terrestrial aliens how to make decisions about watching television.

Make a plan for researching and writing an additional chapter in *The Call to Write*.

**Consider how you will evaluate invention and planning work.** A long-established method for grading student writing is to read the final draft and evaluate its quality. Recent scholarship would suggest that "quality"--i.e., "good writing"--is not an atemporal verity but is instead generated by a fluid mix of rhetorical factors such as context, purpose, and audience. Hence your standards for evaluating students' writing in multiple genres will vary to some extent from one genre, one writing assignment, to another.

When your course is explicitly teaching invention and planning, you may have yet another wrinkle in the grading process. Will you assume that good invention and planning lead to a good final draft, and thus continue to evaluate only your students' final drafts? Many teachers are instead requiring their students to hand in all notes and drafts of a paper, with the earliest work at the bottom of the stack and the final draft on top. This does not devolve upon you the responsibility of reading all the notes and drafts, but it does offer you the opportunity to see whether--and how well--your students engaged in invention and planning. That, in turn, gives you the option of grading that part of their writing process. Or you can use that knowledge to provide deeper responses to their final drafts: you can congratulate them on having used good invention and planning to produce good final drafts; suggest how different strategies of invention and planning might have produced a more effective final draft; or suggest that engaging in invention and planning might have produced a fuller text.
Or you can require the class to turn in regular reports of progress in both invention and planning: e.g., thoughts on invention, successful invention, reports on research planning, a completed plan. These reports can be as simple as a few lines jotted on a notecard or as formal as a typed, double-spaced one- or two-page statement. These can be counted as part of a "preparation grade" for the assignment. Your grading system for them can be as easy as using a check system or as complicated as assigning points or letter grades.

Composition has been a course taught in American colleges since the late 19th century. Only in the mid-20th century, though, did composition studies become a scholarly discipline. Even today, therefore, the teaching of composition is affected by pre-disciplinary practices that received no critical scrutiny; old traditions die hard. One of those traditions is the absence of planning and invention in composition instruction. In their place, only outlining used to be taught. Now, however, you have resources at your disposal for teaching students methods of discovery and means of arranging their ideas. *The Call to Write* is one of the very best resources at your disposal; others are listed in the "For Further Reading" section below.

**FOR FURTHER READING**

**Audience**


### Invention and Planning


Purpose


CHAPTER 6

Teaching Collaborative Writing and Learning

The time is past when we all viewed writing romantically and unrealistically as a solitary act of creation.

Jeanette Harris

THINKING ABOUT COLLABORATIVE WRITING AND LEARNING ANSWERING THE CALL TO TEACH COLLABORATIVE WRITING

One of the great assets of *The Call to Write* is its attention to collaborative learning and writing. From 19th-century Romantic literary theory, composition studies inherited a commitment to individual, solitary writing. But in the 1980s composition teachers began developing theories of and methods for teaching students how and why they should learn and write together.

In *The Call to Write*, John Trimbur, one of the composition scholars who contributed to the disciplinary development of collaborative pedagogy, brings these theories to life, making them part of every chapter. *The Call to Write* offers three general types of collaborative activities: collaborative learning; peer response to individually authored drafts in progress; and collaborative writing. Although all three types of activities appear throughout the book, they are clustered so that Part 1 features collaborative learning assignments; Part 2 features peer response to individually authored drafts in progress; and Part 3 features collaborative writing. This allows students first to become comfortable with the notion of working together. Through collaborative learning activities, they get to know each other; they begin to assume comfortable, productive collaborative roles; and they discover how much more they can learn when they collaborate than when
they work alone. Then through peer response to individually authored drafts in progress, they learn that writing is a negotiation between writer and reader; they become accustomed to listening to and learning from readers' reactions; and they discover how much they can improve their texts by revising in response to those reactions. Finally, through collaborative writing, they learn how to share "ownership" of texts; they learn how to accommodate not just the assets but also the shortcomings of each writer in the group; and they discover how much more can be accomplished by multiple authors. In all these collaborative activities, students using The Call to Write become better writers, not only when they are working with others but also when they are learning alone.

TEACHING COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Collaborative learning activities allow students to get to know each other as intellectuals and to develop comfortable relationships upon which they can draw when, later in the term, they begin responding to each other's writing and then writing together. In The Call to Write, collaborative learning prompts are titled "Working Together." The first of many such prompts appears before Chapter 1, in the introduction: "Working Together: Identifying and Responding to a Call to Write."

Plan Collaborative Learning in Advance

How can you, as a teacher, best prepare students for activities such as this? You may find it useful to tell them before they begin working together that the class will be teaching them how to collaborate, because they will learn more and write better as a result of collaborating and because their work in many academic disciplines and in the workplace may very well be more collaborative than individual. Moreover, when students learn to collaborate, they learn how to continue improving their writing for the rest of their lives. The composition course ends in a few short weeks, and though it will help students with their writing, it will not teach them everything they need to know. If, however, the composition course teaches them how to learn together, how to benefit from others' responses
to their writing, and how to write together, it has provided them with tools for lifelong learning of writing. (Nowhere is this benefit more explicit than in "Working Together: Preparing for Exams," Chapter 19.) Knowing these goals and advantages of collaborative work, students are much more likely to take it seriously and enter into it cheerfully.

You may even want to say to them that these activities make explicit an often-unrecognized "truth" about writing: all writing is collaborative. Even when we believe ourselves to be working alone, we are drawing upon what we have read and heard; we are shaping our text in anticipation of our audience and occasion; and we are enacting roles that our community has provided for us.

**Talk with students about the need for developing relationships of trust.**

Before they begin working in collaborative groups, caution them that they must never succumb to the temptation to make fun of each other's ideas or writing. This is especially important for good friends who may be accustomed to teasing each other. Jokes about each other's work, however friendly and innocuous the intentions, can be deadly to group morale. Writing is part of the writer; to write is to make oneself public and vulnerable. Students must learn to take each other seriously and treat each other with respect, and the teacher may not only want to tell them that in advance but may also want to remind them of it periodically during the semester. Whenever students forget these basic principles of kindness and community, the teacher would do well to intervene and remind them of the optimal conditions for classroom collaboration. True, in the "real world" no one is so carefully protected. But the classroom is not that world; it is a preparation for it, requiring some special conditions that will enable students to gain the confidence in themselves as writers, so that in that "real world" they can withstand ridicule and rejection and keep on writing.

**Consider how the collaborative groups will be formed.**

(See "Organizing the Group," *The Call to Write*, Chapter 13.) Will you, the teacher, assign students to groups? If so, will you form the groups randomly,
or will you try to group students according to their writing, reading, or social skills? Will group membership change with each collaborative assignment, or will it remain the same throughout the semester? Answering these questions depends on factors such as your teaching style; your goals for the students' collaboration; the students' commitment to the course; and the type of institution at which you are teaching. The following are some things to consider:

If you are dedicated to involving students in decision-making for the course, you may want them to choose their own group members.

If you are concerned about how some students may feel if no one wants them as group members, you may want to constitute the groups yourself.

If your goal is for the students to become accustomed to collaborating under a variety of circumstances and with people whom they may not know well, you may want to change the groups with each new collaborative assignment.

If your goal is for the students to learn "deep" collaboration, developing a long-term relationship with other writers, you may want to constitute groups whose membership remains constant for several assignments or perhaps for the entire semester.

If students' class attendance is sometimes an issue, you may want to constitute new groups each time, by random choice. Otherwise, a "group" may consist of only one person.

If students' class preparation is not entirely reliable, you may want to constitute the groups deliberately, putting the underprepared together and giving them a separate task designed to bring them up to speed.

If you are teaching at a small, geographically isolated college where many students in the class already know each other, you may find it advantageous to form the groups yourself. Otherwise, friends may
choose to work together, which increases their comfort level but sometimes reduces the extent to which they are willing to challenge and surprise each other. You may also want to keep changing the membership in the groups; otherwise, the interpersonal tensions and allegiances that can develop on small campuses may intrude into the work of ongoing groups.

Consider the size of collaborative groups.

Notice that in the first collaborative learning assignment, the textbook specifies that the group will consist of three to four people. For most tasks, this is the optimal number. In 50-minute classes, groups of three may prove best; in 75-minute classes, four may be preferred; and in 180-minute classes, you might want to try groups of five. In the first few group exercises of the term, watch the interpersonal dynamics carefully. Is everyone taking part and being heard? Is everyone's work being read? Are the groups finishing their tasks too early? In succeeding classes, you can adjust group size according to your observations.

Regardless of how the groups are constituted, you may also want to appoint a leader for each—a person responsible for keeping the group on task and the work moving.

Consider Your Role During Collaborative Work

Some teachers stay away from groups while they work, electing to give them maximum autonomy. Most, however, take a more active role. Some teachers cruise the room, pausing to ask questions. Some join one group and stick with it through the entire task. Some move from group to group, listening in for a few minutes, offering advice and answering questions, and then moving on. Regardless of which role they adopt, most teachers strive to gain a sense of how each group is doing and what adjustments might need to be made—either in the immediate situation or in future collaborative work.
What happens on one side of the room while you are on the other? Sometimes the groups are on task and sometimes they are not. Miscellaneous chatter about unrelated topics is not uncommon, but you should not automatically challenge it. Through off-task chatter, students may be getting to know each other by listening to and participating in non-threatening talk before they begin (or as a respite from) the more serious work of the assignment. When you notice this sort of talk, you might want to give it a moment or two before inviting the group to return to task. And when you invite them to return to task, you might ask whether they're encountering any difficulties.

**Teach Collaborative Critical Judgment**

The collaborative learning assignments in *The Call to Write* typically encourage students to work together to make critical judgments. Sometimes these critical judgments might seem to be fairly straightforward tasks in reading comprehension, such as underlining major ideas ("Working Together: Practicing Basic Writing Strategies," Chapter Two) or constructing an outline of a reading selection ("Working Together: Practicing Strategies for Analyzing Writing," Chapter Two). By inviting students to compare notes on such apparently straightforward tasks, however, the text suggests to them that even underlining and outlining are interpretive acts, and as such may evidence multiple legitimate variations. As students undertake such tasks, however, it would be useful for you to point out that illegitimate--i.e., incorrect--interpretations are also possible. Students should be alert to the possibility that group members' educational experience, backgrounds, and beliefs can intrude on their reading of a text to the extent that they read something in it that is entirely exterior to the text or miss one of its most important passages. This awareness, applied to familiar tasks of reading comprehension, will help prepare students for more sophisticated tasks of collaborative critical judgment, e.g., "Working Together: Rhetorical Stance," Chapter Three.

**TEACHING PEER RESPONSE TO INDIVIDUAL WRITING**

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In composition classes, the most familiar sort of collaboration is peer response to individual writing in progress. Students compose a draft of an assigned paper, bring it to class, and have other students read and respond to it. In *The Call to Write*, each chapter in Part Two, "Writing Projects," includes a peer response activity. The first ("Peer Commentary," Chapter 4) provides some guidelines for what students should do as they read classmates' papers. It urges group members to identify and describe the implied author of the text, the persona projected in the text. This will be an unfamiliar activity for most, if not all, of your students, and you will need to monitor group activity carefully to be sure that readers aren't lapsing into the much more familiar and comfortable activity of detecting editing errors.

**Plan Peer Response in Advance**

In fact, just as your students needed some preparation for collaborative learning groups, so they will need additional preparation for the specific task of peer response. A good beginning is to tell them that they are not each other's teachers but each other's readers. Their task is not to correct the paper but to give the writer ideas about how the paper affects readers.

A second important thing to point out is that they are responding to an early draft, not a finished product. Thus to focus on issues of editing would be to distract the writer from the more immediate and more important task of developing authorial stance and argument. If readers see repeated errors that they consider important, they can point them out to the writer at the end of class, once the task for the class is completed.

Some teachers find it useful to demonstrate the peer response process to their students. One possibility is to show one of the videos by Connie Hale *et al.* (see "For Further Reading," below). *Student Writing Groups: Demonstrating the Process* depicts graduate students in a peer response group; *Beginning Writing Groups* is designed for a developmental English class. An advantage of such videos is that they are carefully prepared by composition scholars experienced in collaborative theory and methods; a disadvantage is that your own classroom (and the peer response prompts in *The Call to Write*) will probably call for somewhat different peer response
techniques. *The Call to Write*, for example, offers guidelines for students' responses, whereas the group members in *Student Writing Groups* offer unstructured responses derived from their relatively extensive experience as writers.

You may therefore want to **construct your own model group**. Provide all the class members with a draft of one student's paper and the corresponding peer response guidelines from *The Call to Write*. Designate three additional students as group members. Seat the group at the front of the class, where they can go through the peer response process while the rest of the class watches and takes notes. At the end of the model session, the entire class—including the model group members—can discuss what took place, identifying the techniques they want to replicate and the ones on which they want to improve. Conducting a model peer response session can also prove useful later in the semester, if students (or you) are feeling that groups aren't accomplishing all that they might.

**Consider Your Role During Peer Response**

As was the case with collaborative learning, you have choices about your role during peer response, ranging from your staying away from the groups to your taking part in them. Again, though, whatever role you choose, you will need to monitor the collaborative work and intervene when you see problems arising.

**Encourage your students to sit very close together**, especially in the first peer response sessions. In fact, they should violate American norms of personal space. If they stretch out, establishing several feet of personal space, they may not be able to hear each other. (The peer response classroom is a noisy one, especially if the class is large.) Moreover, physical distance from each other encourages physical distance from the text and the writer. You will find a great deal more talk and considerably more engagement in the task if the group members are sitting practically knee-to-knee.
Always be alert, in particular, to the student who has pushed away from the group and is either staring into space or studying the text. The rest of the group is engaged, talking; this student is clearly not taking part. Drop in on that student; find out what is going on; help him or her back into the group.

Consider whether students will read drafts aloud or silently. Their own choice will likely be to read silently; students generally feel foolish when reading their work aloud. But when they do so, the writer invariably gains new perspectives on the work, not just catching editing errors but, more importantly, hearing the voice that emerges from the page. Readers, too, benefit from reading aloud: slow and fast readers proceed at the same pace; no one has to wait for anyone else, and everyone has time for reflection as the piece is read aloud.

Do allow students the option of reading their own work aloud or having another group member read it.

Sequence Exercises in Peer Response

As your students work through Part 2 of The Call to Write, they will work with guidelines that prompt them toward increasingly analytic and sophisticated responses to drafts in progress. The second peer response prompt ("Peer Commentary," Chapter 5) refers students back to the guidelines in the previous chapter, allowing them to become comfortable with peer response before moving on to other guidelines. Later prompts will ask for entirely different responses. "Peer Commentary" in Chapter 6, for example, asks group members to analyze format, language, and tone of public documents.

Much later in the book, after students have become experienced in modes of peer response that are tied to the task at hand, The Call to Write offers a general overview of approaches to peer response ("Peer Commentary," Chapter 12). Equipped with their own experiences in peer response, at this point students will be better able to understand, make use of, and remember these general guidelines. When you reach Chapter 12, therefore, you may want to take the occasion to reflect on what peer response groups have
been accomplishing in class and how they can use these generic guidelines to make peer response even more useful.

TEACHING COLLABORATIVE WRITING

Plan Collaborative Writing in Advance

Chapter 13 of *The Call to Write* invites students to compose documents together. Several exercises earlier in the book ("Working Together: Writing and Designing A Letter of Appeal," Chapter 4; "Working Together: Advocacy Group Proposals," Chapter 10; and "Working Together: Course Review") will have given them some preparatory experience in collaborative writing. Now they will undertake a more extensive project, and they will need more detailed guidance in the process.

Before they begin, they will benefit from your pointing out that in a collaborative project, the work is never shared evenly. Students should try to divide the work fairly, but some will inevitably work harder than others or make more important contributions. If everyone knows this before the project begins, they are much more likely to accept the circumstance cheerfully.

They also need to know that they will not necessarily agree on what should be written. Bring their attention to "Encourage Differences of Opinion," Chapter 13, and talk with them about how the groups might deal with dissent. Instead of suppressing or ignoring dissent, they might decide to turn in their collaborative project with a minority opinion (Supreme Court-style) attached. Or they might want to incorporate dissent into the text, as counter-evidence (see "Conceding to Differing Views" and "Negotiating Differing Views," Chapter 3). Regardless of how dissent is presented, though, everyone in the group should work together on both the majority and minority viewpoints.
Guide Your Students in Dividing the Work

"Division of Labor or Integrated Team," Chapter 13, describes two modes of collaborative writing. In *dialogic collaboration*, the entire team works together on every phase of the project. Students will learn the most in this sort of writing, but it is also the most labor-intensive and time-consuming. In *hierarchical collaboration*, each member of the team takes responsibility for one part of the task. Because of its efficiency, students will probably be inclined more toward this mode. **Encourage them to imagine their project in both dialogic and hierarchical terms.** They might, for example, engage in dialogic collaboration to design the project and agree on a thesis, hierarchical collaboration to gather data, and dialogic collaboration to edit the project at the end.

One important decision that groups need to make before they begin their project is **how to deal with a member who does not do his or her part.** Do they want slackers to receive the same grade as the rest of the group? Do they want the group to assign a grade to a slacker? Do they want slackers ejected from the group and given an "F" for the project? You will probably be involved in dealing with any problems of non-participation that arise, but those problems will be best resolved if each group has determined its procedures in advance. Self-determination, moreover, tends to make group members more accountable to each other and tends to give potential slackers a greater sense of responsibility and consequences.

Monitor and Mentor the Writing Process

**Groups need to work independently and you need to know what they are doing.** Your participating in one group meeting ("Productive Meetings," Chapter 13) may be advisable. Groups should periodically file a progress report to you ("Progress Reports," Chapter 13) so that you can help them past any barriers they may be encountering. Self-evaluations ("Confidential Self-Evaluation," Chapter 13) will be most useful if the groups have determined in advance what they will do about slackers.
Adopt Appropriate Grading Methods and Criteria

Some teachers devise mechanisms for assigning individual grades to members of a collaborative writing project. More attuned to the nature of collaboration, however, is a single grade given to each member of the group.

Consider a Sample Assignment

The following assignment was given in a composition class taught by Amy Rupiper at TCU. The assignment culminates a semester's work with *The Call to Write*:

Collaboration is virtually a way of life and is especially relevant in communities. As we've discussed, collaboration can take many forms and can come at almost any stage of the writing process, not just at revision time. In this project, then, you will attempt to work collaboratively throughout the process to produce a single coherent document and presentation. Choose a topic within your sub-community and determine what major problem, issue, or conflict you wish to address. Go through the processes of planning, idea generation, organization, drafting, and revision together with your group. You may use a hierarchical, dialogic, or mixed model of collaboration. The final product should reflect the work of 3-4 people. It should not be something easily accomplished by one person. I would recommend a proposal, a public document, or possibly an extended commentary as the genre for this final project. Select carefully!

**Sections:** One-page audience assessment (detailed). This should describe your primary and secondary audiences and will count as page one of the paper; suggested equivalent of an eight-page paper (plus audience assessment=nine pages); works cited or works consulted page; any illustrative attachments, clearly marked (not required, but recommended).

**Grading:** Each group will receive two separate grades: one for the paper and one for the presentation. These will be averaged. I'll be looking to see: whether you can work together effectively as a team, involving all members; whether you can express yourselves well both orally and in writing; whether the written portion effectively and appropriately addresses the audience and conflict you've identified.

**Sources:** A collaborative project should reflect serious research. A few sources would not be adequate to understand the subject. (Presumably, you've already read a couple that will be appropriate.) Of course, you may use books, articles, Internet resources, interviews, surveys, and any other relevant resources. Remember the local focus of this course and use some local resources. Be sure to compile a complete bibliography early and divide up the reading or identify which sources you all should have read or consulted.

**Things to Remember:** A good team usually has a point person. Try to designate the person early; he or she keeps track of your progress.
If you have conflicts, try to work them out among yourselves first. If you cannot resolve them, come to see me.

Even though this is a collaborative project, you should maintain a clear focus, and the written portion should be integrated and coherent.

**Presentations:** Each individual will have 7-10 minutes. Multimedia presentations are often most effective because visuals help to back up the verbal; feel free to bring relevant video clips, graphs, charts, etc. You will have access to the overhead projector and, if you let me know early enough, I can try to reserve a television. Unfortunately, LCD (computer) projectors are almost impossible to reserve. If you do a web site or a power point presentation, you may want to consider making transparencies of the relevant pages. Groups should also try to engage the rest of the class in discussion. This may come in the form of an activity or questions.

**Collaborative project schedule:**

11-10
Begin collaborative workshops:
Collaborative planning
See main schedule for reading

11-12
More collaborative planning: Prepare a detailed plan with dates
Portfolios Due

11-17
Submit collaborative plan to me. Begin following plan (suggestion: invention)

11-19
Suggestion: Begin organizing information (outline, idea tree, webbing)
In-class conferences
Last day to let me know if you need a TV/VCR.
Journal 5

11-24
Suggestion: drafting
In-class conferences
Quiz 5: Collaborative Writing Projects, Public Documents, Document Design
Assigning collaborative writing presents a wide array of challenges for both teacher and students. If you follow the guidelines in this chapter, however, you will find the terrain much easier to negotiate. *The Call to Write* makes collaboration seem a natural, necessary means of writing. By the end of the term, in fact, your students will probably count their collaborative writing as their most rewarding experience in the class. They will regard it as a natural, normal way to write, and their individually authored work will measurably benefit from what they have learned in collaboration.
FOR FURTHER READING

Overviews on Collaboration


Collaborative Learning

Bruffee, Kenneth A. "Collaborative Learning and the Conversation of Mankind." College English 46.7 (November 1984): 635-52.


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**Peer Response to Writing**


**Collaborative Writing**


CHAPTER 7

Teaching the Form of Non-Fiction Prose

The writer is the architect of the house of meaning and the writer works as an architect: selecting from the inventory of traditional forms; discovering the form that is buried in the drafting board sketch or draft; or designing a new form to fit this particular situation.

Donald Murray

THINKING ABOUT THE FORM OF NON-FICTION PROSE

One of the enduring, powerful dialectics that shapes the teaching of composition is that between writing-as-craft, and rhetoric more broadly conceived. Who can deny that the study of writing is always at least in part about constructing sentences and paragraphs, connecting parts, honing style—the craft of writing? Yet without the synthesizing, conceptualizing eye of rhetoric, which attends to situation, audience, effects of writing in the social world, over-attention to craft can lead us to convey a belief that there are doctrines about writing, prose style, and prose arrangement that are always reliable, in any situation. As writing teachers, part of our responsibility is to ensure that this dialogue is vigorous and visible to our students—that attention to the craft of prose is carefully situated in a rhetorical frame, and that a lively conception of the rhetorical frame in turn encourages the kind of experimentation that leads to sharp and appropriate prose style and arrangements.

The genre approach of The Call to Write, as well as its perspective that writing is social action, can help us to put our understandings and practices as prose writers into a broad rhetorical frame. Decisions about style and arrangement will vary from genre to genre, for instance; and the social world into which any given piece of writing enters also will affect those decisions. Encouraging an active sense of play in student writers—inviting them to try a variety of strategies for arrangement and style—can
result in a more extensive repertoire, one that will enable knowledgeable, flexible, and deft rhetorical conceptions and prose performances.

TEACHING THE FORM OF NON-FICTION PROSE

The second edition of *The Call to Write* features a study of the form of nonfiction prose in Chapter 14; many prose strategies are also embedded in the genre chapters throughout Part 2. The embedded material suggests a practical approach to teaching the craft of prose: to situate discussions of prose strategies in actual, ongoing writing projects in which students are engaged. To that end, here are some ideas for integrating a rhetorically grounded approach to prose stylistics and form into your course.

**Draw on the rhetorical situations in which your students are writing to guide your focus on prose stylistics and form.**

Are your students working on practical documents, like FAQs or brochures? Perhaps you will want to focus on strategies that help the writer to divide information, and to organize it. On the other hand, a genre such as the memoir relies much more on the flow of language, so that strategies that help the writer to use temporal and spatial cues, as well as strategies having to do with coherence, may be the most appropriate. Each genre chapter considers strategies typically useful for that genre, but you may also bring in material from Chapter 14 where it is appropriate.

**Draw on prose style and form strategies as you need them and as the classroom demands them.**

The topical format of Chapter 14 may lead you to want to assign it as a reading and a topic for discussion. In some contexts, this may work well, particularly where you are shaping a formal discussion of prose style or arrangement; this might work in conjunction with specific readings, either those contained in that chapter or others. However, many teachers will want to be more opportunistic with the chapter, selecting sections of it that will give a sharper insight to both the craft aspects of a text as well as its rhetorical situation. Again, using this material situationally may have the
desired effect of helping students to see craft as an aspect of their rhetorical practice; it may also help to construct a “repertoire of strategies” schema for students as they experiment with and try more and more strategies within a specific learning context.

For instance, if students need to cite a personal anecdote in the context of a letter written to a public official, you might draw upon the notion of narration as a strategy, asking students to look at that portion of Chapter 14. The learning context, then, allows students to see a rhetorical context in which narration as a strategy might be meaningful, as opposed to studying the entire chapter as a piece.

**Use the strategies for prose style and form as the basis for peer review.**

Chapter 6 of this manual discusses peer review in some detail, in particular suggesting that instructors should carefully plan peer review. As a part of those plans, you might lead peer readers to look specifically at one or another of the prose strategies. Attention to these strategies might work better on a second review than in a first, where students typically should focus on larger rhetorical issues.

Asking peer readers to focus at least partly on prose strategies can have at least two benefits. The first is that students may become more alert readers—and writers—adept at recognizing and practicing rhetorically appropriate strategies of prose form and style. The second is that this focused attention on at least some aspects of craft in the peer review can again help to construct the “repertoire of strategies” schema.

For instance, if students are peer-reviewing proposals, you might design a peer-review session where one focus is the unity of the paragraphs. (Of course, this would only be one focus—in a proposal, you will also necessarily want a focus on the logic of problem and solution, the likely effects upon an intended audience, and so forth.) As students read and respond to the drafts of proposals written by their peers, in the midst of
larger rhetorical concerns, they will also consider the effect of paragraph construction upon those concerns.

**Use individual conferences with students to introduce, encourage, or reinforce aspects of prose craft.**

The individual student conference offers a unique opportunity for situated instruction, since by its very nature, the conference puts the individual writer and his or her text at the center. The conference can allow you to mentor students in the aspects of prose craft that seem most appropriate to the writing task and the rhetorical situation.

You might find, for instance, that you can most effectively encourage playfulness with craft in this setting. As you engage in the dialogue of the conference, inquiring into a student’s reasons for choosing the strategies he did, you can also propose that he try other strategies, always encouraging reflection upon the effects of any strategy.

Some students will seek a conference with an instructor at their own initiative. Others will not, which is why many composition teachers schedule conferences for all students at key points during the term. If you decide to do this, be sure to be realistic about the time it takes to effectively talk with a student writer about his or her writing. It’s also a good idea to ask student writers to make a plan for their own conferences—perhaps a list of questions or topics they’d like to discuss, or concerns they have about a draft.

The discipline of conferencing for instructors is to allow for a dialogue, and not let fatigue lead to too much teacher-talk. Asking students to plan their own conferences can be one safeguard, but using the strategy of asking students questions about their writing can also be very effective.

**Consider making revision the focus of your instruction on prose craft.**

Another way to situate the discussion of prose craft into larger contexts is to make revision the site for that discussion. For instance, as students
proceed from an early draft with broad rhetorical feedback, you might encourage them to play with different prose strategies. One way to encourage this kind of purposeful revision is to ask them to sketch a revision plan that includes this kind of stylistic or formal play. If a student has used one model for beginning a piece, he or she might play with several strategies for creating introductions. Part of the instructor’s response to an early draft, then, might be to refer the student writer to parts of the text that offer alternatives, so that the student writer can experiment with those strategies in successive drafts. Again, encourage reflection upon this experimentation—students can consciously be constructing the repertoire of strategies they need to become more flexible and knowing writers.

Encourage students to take an opportunistic approach to their use of the textbook with regard to prose craft.

Instructors often construct their courses this way, looking for the elements and aspects of the text that will support their instructional aims. Your writing assignments from The Call to Write are unlikely to be substantially founded on the prose craft aspects of the text, but they can be enriched by those aspects. Students, as well, can benefit from this approach, where they seek what they need. To that end, it’s helpful for the instructor to foreground the craft aspects of the text for students. This can be done in a variety of contexts—in a whole-class activity; in conference; in responses to drafts.

Talk with your students about your own sense of writing-as-craft—what aspects of prose style and arrangement you yourself regard as important.

What specific aspects of prose craft matter most to you as a writer and as a teacher? Why do you value these aspects of writing? How did you learn to value them? Asking yourself these questions—and even making this inquiry a matter of public discussion in the classroom—can help to uncover the social values that attention to the craft of prose embodies. For instance, attention to craft in writing derives at least in part from literary
studies and aesthetics. Simply knowing this could lead to a fruitful unpacking of the ways that traditional values about prose craft tend to conserve certain ways of knowing and writing.

**Encourage ongoing experimentation in matters of craft, as a means to expand and develop the student’s repertoire of stylistic and organizational strategies.**

This point is embedded in several of the above notions about teaching the craft of prose, but it’s perhaps worth mentioning again: the aspects of prose style and arrangement discussed in *The Call to Write* can be thought of as a repertoire or inventory of available strategies, with which students should have ample opportunity to practice and experiment. The writing teacher can play a constructive role in the development of this repertoire, by directing students’ attention to strategies that they may not have considered, or with which they may have little experience. Most importantly, though, writing instructors can assist in this process simply by themselves enacting, through the ways they deploy the lessons in prose craft contained in *The Call to Write*, a conception of the craft of writing as rhetorical in nature.

The resources for teaching writing-as-craft in *The Call to Write* are plentiful, and adaptable to many writing situations. The instructor’s task is really to select from among these resources, to guide students to those that are most useful and appropriate for their writing projects, and to teach prose craft as an aspect of the rhetorical situation.

**Try these exercises:**

1. Much like the exercise Trimbur sketches for looking at the three reading selections in Chapter 14, have students inventory their own writing for the major organizational strategies listed by Trimbur: top down, hierarchical, and open form.
2. Have students annotate their drafts, identifying paragraph by paragraph (or section by section, depending upon the genre) how each piece of text functions.
3. Late in the term, you might ask students to create an inventory of the various strategies for crafting prose that they’ve employed, as well as the ones they’ve tried. Some reflection here would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER READING


CHAPTER 8

Using Portfolios

To assume responsibility . . . means to take charge, to find a public voice, to claim authority and ownership.

Beverly C. Wall and Robert F. Peltier

THINKING ABOUT PORTFOLIOS

Just as the study of genres encourages students to realize their own expertise in writing, and just as writing literacy narratives gives them a greater sense of control over their writing, portfolio evaluation belongs in a composition course that strives to recognize students as authors. When students assemble portfolios of their writing, they take responsibility not only for the completion of the various writing assignments in the course, but also for reflecting on, selecting among, and revising those assignments—that is, they take responsibility for themselves not just as students but as authors.

In 1997, the National Council of Teachers of English published a set of principles regarding portfolios. Here are a few:

$ Improving learning and teaching is at the heart of the portfolio process.

$ Contents and format are negotiated between student and teacher. The portfolio can take a variety of forms.

$ Student choice is essential. The student must select and reflect upon the contents within negotiated parameters.

$ Purpose and audience determine what goes in the portfolio and how the portfolio is organized and shared.
Reflection is an essential element; without reflection, the portfolio is merely a collection.

(Source: Portfolio Teaching: A Guide for Instructors, Nedra Reynolds)

Course-Internal Portfolios

Portfolio systems are well established in composition curricula for a variety of reasons. Many teachers elect to have an end-of-term assignment in which students select, revise, write a cover letter for, and present one or more of the texts they have previously written in the course. Some writing teachers encourage students to submit texts written for other classes and occasions, as well. (Others, however, caution that such a practice can facilitate ghostwritten entries in the portfolio.) Course-internal portfolios offer a variety of benefits:

Students are required to revisit previously submitted writing, to see ot afresh, and to revise it again. Thus portfolios are an aid to teaching revision.

Students are required to write a cover letter for each text included in the portfolio and/or for the entire portfolio. Cover letters for individual texts describe how those texts represent the student author, and also what sorts of revisions the author has made and why. Cover letters for the entire portfolio describe the author presented in it; often they take the form of a literacy narrative (see Chapter 7 of this manual), describing the students' writing experiences in the course and how they gave rise to--or arose from--the texts included in the portfolio. Thus, portfolios are an aid to teaching reflection.

Students may be required to include in the portfolio an evidenced argument for the grade they believe they deserve for the work. Thus portfolios prompt self-assessment.
Multi-Section Portfolios

In multi-section portfolio systems, teachers agree to read and evaluate portfolios from each other's classes. The range of benefits from portfolio evaluation then expands dramatically.

**Students' Benefits**

Students in composition courses participating in multi-section portfolio evaluation receive all of the benefits of course-internal portfolio evaluation. In addition, they have one or more outside readers who are responding only to their texts, not their persons. Thus they receive a dispassionate, professional evaluation of the rhetorical effect of their writing. Other benefits include:

Students may be more inclined to believe that their writing has been evaluated fairly.

Students will not be likely to expect to sway the outside readers' judgments with factors like effort and cooperation.

For the above reasons, students may then be more likely to work harder to produce clear, engaging, appropriate prose.

Teachers in multi-section portfolio systems become their students' coaches, shifting from the evaluative, summative role toward a more supportive, formative role.

**Teachers' Benefits**

The comfort zone of teaching increases as teachers share their grading criteria. No longer is the teacher isolated with a stack of papers; instead, he or she is in conversation--and collaborative decision-making--with colleagues. Thus the portfolio system
creates a community of teachers.

The teacher is no longer in a position of negotiating students' complaints that their work has been graded unfairly.

**Program-Wide Portfolios**

In many writing programs, portfolio evaluation is not an option; it is built into the course structure. In addition to all the benefits just listed, programmatic portfolio systems offer these positive outcomes:

When teachers grade individual essays assigned in their courses they tend to evaluate them based on global notions of what constitutes "good writing," but in portfolio systems the grading criteria are grounded in the goals of the course.

Similar grading criteria obtain across all sections of the course.

A sense of common purpose prevails among the faculty members, who feel accountable for their decisions.

A sense of common curriculum prevails among the students.

The portfolios can be used for course placement exams; for course exit exams; and for demonstrating contextualized instructional outcomes to external groups such as accrediting agencies and state legislators.

**ASSIGNING PORTFOLIOS**

**Guide Your Students Through Assembling the Portfolio.** Give the class explicit written instructions for assembling the portfolio, and also go over these instructions before students begin the task and periodically as it
is underway. Consider including the following elements in your written instructions:

1. Explain why you (or your department) decided to assign portfolios.
2. Specify what should be included in the portfolio, e.g.,

   A table of contents.

   A preface that acknowledges and describes the assistance that the author received in developing the texts or the portfolio itself. The preface should list contributors by name.

   Revised versions of previously submitted texts.

   All notes toward and drafts of those previously submitted texts, to demonstrate the writing process that produced the revised work.

   Copies of peer and professorial commentary on the texts in progress.

   A review (see Chapter 11) of the portfolio.

   A literacy narrative (see Chapter 1) that describes the experience of the course and/or of assembling the portfolio.

3. A self-assessing argument for what grade the portfolio should receive.

4. Set up one or more peer review sessions for the portfolios.

5. Explain how the portfolios will be evaluated.
6. Explain to students that, in the future, they might find other calls to assemble a portfolio. Artists’ portfolios are well known, but today people in many professions routinely present not just their résumé but a portfolio of their work. In the discipline of composition studies, for example, teaching portfolios have become a commonplace component of job applications.

Guide Your Students Through Designing the Portfolio

*The Call to Write* consistently asks students to think about the role of visual elements in various genres—diagrams or graphs in reports or proposals, various typeface combinations or choices in letters of appeal, the purposeful inclusion of photos in any number of genres. The pieces a student includes in a portfolio for a course employing *The Call to Write* will inevitably contain evidence of creative attention to document design. Such consideration of visual elements, however, can apply to the design of the whole portfolio, as well. Beyond the design considerations of selecting and organizing the content of individual pieces, students can also be asked to think about visual design of their portfolios.

**In small groups in class, have students review the sections on document design** throughout *The Call to Write* and locate design ideas that could be effectively applied to their portfolios. Advise them to keep audience and purpose clearly in view when making these choices. Advise them, too, not to lose sight of the mundane but necessary design issues: the portfolio will, for example, need sequential page numbering.

**The visual element should be thought of in terms of personalizing the portfolio.** The portfolio as a document is a presentation of self, and students can be given more freedom about design choices than they may be given in content selection or organization.

**Students can also collaborate on graphic design choices.** Having studied issues of design in the various genres of writing
they have explored, they should be able to reach agreement in groups about what guidelines for graphic elements in portfolios would be most suitable.

Collaborate with Other Teachers

If your department does not require program-wide portfolios, you may want to consider setting up a multi-section portfolio system in which you collaborate with one or more teachers of your course. Take the following factors into account:

If you are a first-time composition teacher who has not had an exceptionally thorough and specific preparation for the course, you should not engage in portfolio evaluation. Use your first semester to gain some first-hand familiarity with the complex basics of teaching composition; add portfolios in a later term.

In a shared portfolio system, the workload increases because each teacher is reading not only his or her own portfolios but also those of another teacher. Thus portfolio evaluation can operate well only in programs that have carefully controlled course enrollments and teaching loads. If your full-time teaching load gives you 60 or more students in a semester, you should think twice about taking on the additional work of shared portfolio evaluation. However, you and your colleagues may want to consider reducing the number of papers assigned in your courses as compensation for your extra workload; the change is easily justified by the additional work--and additional learning--that the students will be doing.

Get together well in advance of the semester and plan your collaborative work. Before the semester begins, you will need to set common grading criteria and apply them to some sample papers. In many systems, teachers work together to agree on what warrants each grade in the scale, from "A" to "F." Other systems undertake a less arduous task: collaborative portfolio grading is
conducted only to determine a "C" or better for the course. In other words, for the student to receive at least a "C" in composition, he or she must submit at least a "C" portfolio at the end of the term. This sort of system requires far fewer and less exhaustive (and exhausting) norming sessions of the faculty.

During the term, you will need several meetings for general discussion of the project, sharing assignments and experiences.

At the end of term, you will need a grading session. Although you can each grade your own and each other's portfolios on your own, you will then need to go over them together to work out disagreements. Some systems use three-person grading teams for each portfolio: the student's instructor, an instructor from another section, and a third instructor in case the first two disagree in their evaluations of the portfolio.

John David Moore of Eastern Illinois University offers students the following sample portfolio guidelines:

Your performance in this course will be evaluated, in part, by the Composition Committee, who will review both your midterm and final portfolios. The portfolio method has been chosen in order to enable students to have some control in selecting a representative sample of their work to be graded. As an indication of your progress, the midterm portfolio may significantly affect the emphasis and direction of the latter half of the course. It is, therefore, in your best interests to write and revise carefully and to select your finest work for your portfolios.

MIDTERM: The midterm portfolio will contain one revised out-of-class essay with a copy of the topic, and one of the two in-class midterm essays, each to be chosen by the student. The midterm portfolio will be used solely as an indication of your progress and will have no bearing on the final grade.

FINAL: The final portfolio will contain two revised out-of-class essays with copies of the topics, and one of the two final exam essays. Again, you will choose what to include. One of the two out-of-class essays may be the essay included in the midterm portfolio, provided that the essay has been revised since midterm.
Consider Electronic Portfolios

Electronic portfolios extend the advantages of portfolios in the following ways:

Electronic portfolios are instantly accessible to teachers and peers for feedback.

They enhance students' technology skills, including multimedia skills, and increase their sense of ownership, an important benefit of portfolios noted during the pilot project.

They allow students to include work in other formats such as graphics, sound, music, art, photos, and video.

With electronic portfolios, students could include work that represents their collaborations with others students.

Electronic portfolios make it easier for students to store their work and add to it in the future for new purposes.

BOTH MIDTERM AND FINAL PORTFOLIOS must contain the following:

A personal statement explaining why you selected these essays as representative of your work.

Drafts of the portfolio essays. This includes drafts of the chosen in-class essays.

A statement written by the instructor certifying the essays to be genuinely the work of the student.

A checklist compiled by the instructor showing a) your completion of all course work, and b) the number of times assignments have been revised.

NOTE: Be sure to make and retain copies of all work that you submit in your portfolios!
Portfolios can be put on disk or can be formatted as web pages. Exploiting the technology of web page design, electronic portfolios can eloquently reveal the writer's sense of integration among what has been produced. Using Hypertext Markup Language (HTML), students can create portfolios that not only discuss the integration that writers discover in their cumulative experience, but also reveal that integration in the portfolio's structure through the associative links that characterize hypertext documents. Moreover, computer-assisted writing instruction, whether using HTML or not, offers students the ability to employ graphic design with an ease never before available. Given the access to such electronic tools as HTML editors (web authoring programs) and an array of graphics programs, students can be encouraged to do a number of things in conjunction with the visual design of their portfolios:

They can search for and exchange freeware and shareware graphics programs that may offer interesting possibilities for portfolio designs.

As portfolio design merges with web page design, students can learn more about the capabilities of hypertext by studying existing web sites. Graphics browsers with a View Source option can display the HTML used to create the document.

HTML essentially creates an index-like approach to reading (rather than a sequential approach). Hence, to better understand what hypertext has to offer for portfolio design, students can be assigned to study actual indexes and to list things they might want to include in an index to their portfolio.

**DESIGNING YOUR SYLLABUS**

**Reduce the number of papers you would have otherwise assigned.** Implementing a portfolio system not only increases teachers' workload (see discussion above) but students', too. Make syllabus adjustments that
will restore balance to your workload and to your students'.

**Include portfolio guidelines (see sample above) in the syllabus,** or hand them out at the beginning of the term.

**Set up a midsemester provisional portfolio submission.** This provisional portfolio can include only one paper, if you wish, but your students will need a practice run before they submit the final portfolio. This midterm portfolio should be graded; otherwise, some students may not give it the attention it needs.

**Arrange for small-group conferences with three to four students at a time while they are assembling the portfolio.** Your students will have many questions that will need your individual attention, yet they will benefit from hearing each other's questions and your answers. The small-group setting, moreover, offers an opportunity for the students themselves to take part in answering the questions.

**Arrange for individual conferences after the portfolios have been graded.** Many teachers, in fact, return portfolios only during these conferences. Face-to-face discussion provides fitting closure to such an important writing event. Yet the conference need not be long; in ten minutes you can amply explain your response to the portfolio, with time to spare for you and the student to discuss its significance in the student's writing life.

**GRADING**

**When you are reading the portfolio, do not respond to each paper in it.** That would not only defeat the purpose of the portfolio but would also make your workload impossible. Instead, respond to the portfolio in its entirety and to the author it represents. You can, in this response, make occasional reference to specific passages of the portfolio.

**Evaluate not just the quality of the writing in the portfolio but also the independence of the students' revisions.** As you look over their notes
and drafts and the suggestions that you and their classmates made, do you find that they have merely obeyed the suggestions of their readers, or have they applied critical judgment to those suggestions and to their own work?

**Most portfolios for composition classes collect, select, and revise texts that have previously been submitted in the course.** Consider how you will grade papers when they are submitted for the first time. Will each paper receive an A-to-F letter grade? In that case, the portfolio would also receive an A-to-F letter grade that constitutes a portion of the course grade, with the previous grading of the individual papers constituting another portion. Other options, however, are possible; for example:

When the individual papers are submitted for a grade, you can assign them an "S" or a "U." Unsatisfactory papers must be revised until they receive an "S." To earn a "C" for the course, students must receive an "S" on all graded papers. Then to receive an "A" or a "B" for the course, they must receive that grade on their portfolio. In a system such as this, students' work on the individual papers determines whether they receive a "C," and their work on the portfolio determines whether they receive an "A" or a "B." Thus when you (and your colleagues) grade the portfolios, you are determining only whether the portfolio warrants an "A" or "B."

When the individual papers are submitted for a grade, you can assign them an A-to-F letter grade. The average of these grades will constitute the students' grade for the course. The team-graded portfolio then serves as a quality check: regardless of their grades on the individual papers, students cannot receive a "C" or better for the course unless the portfolio is deemed to be of at least "C" quality.
FOR FURTHER READING


CHAPTER 9

Some Suggestions for Teaching The Call to Write

What follows is a chapter by chapter overview of material provided on the companion website, and additional ideas for teaching. Also please consult the “Student Gallery” (on the companion website) for examples of student writing.

CHAPTER 1
WHAT IS WRITING? ANALYZING LITERACY EVENTS

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise for students called “The Web: A Context for Communication in Everyday Life” invites students to consider the everyday uses to which they put the Internet.
3. Multiple web resources link students to sites where they can investigate the themes of Chapter 1.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Students could gather evidence of the four contexts of literacy events: everyday life, the workplace, the public sphere, and school. Students might work in small groups to assemble casebooks of materials, and could report to the class on their findings, generally to investigate “how writing is an integral part of our lives as private individuals, workers, citizens, and students.”
2. When the instructor assigns Chapter 1 for reading, she might also ask students to write in a journal or elsewhere about their experience writing in the four contexts. In class, those individual responses might
compose a collective list, which could then form the basis of a
discussion. Often, students will have less experience writing in the
public sphere, even wondering what that term might mean. This can
be an opportunity for exploring the ways that they can begin to
imagine themselves as writers who act in the social world.

CHAPTER 2
READING STRATEGIES: ANALYZING THE RHETORICAL
SITUATION

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Previewing and Organizing Internet Genres” that
   encourages students to compare the rhetorical elements of print text
   with a website. This exercise links to AIDS sites.
2. An exercise called “Analyzing and Evaluating Electronic Texts” offers
   students the opportunity to read an electronic text and apply a distinct
   interpretive framework to it in order to determine its rhetorical effect
   and credibility.
3. Multiple resources for conducting credible research are available, such
   as the archive at www.findarticles.com.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the
following:

1. Since The Call to Write puts its focus on the activities surrounding
   genres, it is important to help students develop an acute appreciation of
   rhetorical context. You might therefore have students analyze a cross
   section of the readings on AIDS and discuss what each piece reveals
   about the writer’s sense of purpose and audience. Perhaps you might
   ask them to produce a rhetorical analysis paper.
2. Emphasize with students that reading is in itself an act of invention;
   that is, one reads not only for information but also to discover the
   nature of the conversation on an issue and how one might enter into it.
   This is a critical point for students understand if they are to develop an
   authorial voice in their writing.
CHAPTER 3
PERSUASION AND RESPONSIBILITY: ANALYZING ARGUMENTS

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Argument: Dealing With Reasonable Differences” attempts to have look at argument as an act of negotiation or an attempt to create a transaction among readers and writers.
2. An exercise called “Analyzing Arguments” with a link to FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting).
3. An exercise called “Engage in Argumentation” asks students to visit an online forum and participate in the discussion on an issue of interest to them.
4. Multiple websites that pertain to many of the most contested issues of the day.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. In Chapter 3 of *The Call to Write*, Trimbur discusses some of the contexts in which arguments become explicit, or, in effect, social. To influence others, one must be able to understand why others take another viewpoint. Without this understanding, one has little hope of influencing others. As a class project, students in small groups could put together surveys on issue of their choice (to be administered to students in the class or outside). The purpose of the survey is to understand what people believe on a given issue, and why they believe as they do.
2. If we accept the premise that much writing is, implicitly or explicitly, argument, then we must consider what makes us most persuasive with readers who are informed, but do not share our positions. Ask students to examine the role of the rhetorical appeals as it pertains to several genres discussed in the text.
CHAPTER 4
LETTERS: ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Reading Open Letters” links to an open letters website. This exercise invites students to consider how open letters maintain the characteristics of personal letters while extending their boundaries as a genre.
2. An exercise called “Reading Letters of Appeal” asks students to samples on the Doctors Without Borders and Amnesty International websites to analyze them for their use of appeals.
3. An exercise called “Writing Letters and Research” encourages students to view public letters as arguments, thereby requiring the writer to display a level of expertise of its subject.
4. An exercise on netiquette underscores that in the age of email, letters have more exposure; this requires that we must develop guidelines for producing e-mail.
5. Links to sites representing the personal and social function of letters, and the variety of forms they might take.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Students may be given to thinking about letters as merely personal, and not particularly rhetorical. However, if students think back on the letter they have written, they should discover that they often had specific identifiable outcomes. You might ask students to think back to examples of letters they have written and discuss their purposes.
2. There was a time when most published letters were written by famous people. E-mail, of course, has changed all that, but even before the advent of this technology, an interest in “commonplace” writing began to develop. Students might do some research on the letters of a particular group, such as the letters of soldiers at war. Ask student to speculate about why these letters, written by “non-authors,” would capture the attention of readers?

3. Students who choose to write letters as a class assignment often gravitate toward letters to the editor. Perhaps this is because such letters are readily available. If students choose this approach, you might discuss the social function of the public forum. Also, stress that they should approach their letters rhetorically, with a more acute sense of audience than “the general public.”

CHAPTER 5
MEMOIRS: RECALLING EXPERIENCE

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “The Place of Memoirs” links to a wide variety of memoirs one might find on the Internet. According to P. J. O’Rourke, memoirs are extremely popular today (much to his chagrin). You might students to speculate on the social and technological reasons behind this phenomenon.

2. An exercise called “Thinking Critically About Oral History and Memoir” that asks students consider the relationship between oral history and memoir. What are the similarities and differences in their respective forms and uses?

3. An activity called “Researching the Social and Cultural Contexts for Memoir” to reflect on the rise of personal knowledge. This asks students to think about the knowledge we gain from memoirs. How has the memoir perhaps changed the definition of knowledge?

4. Links to important memoirs, such as those of Holocaust survivors, and one by Conor Cruise O’Brien on growing up in Ireland.
In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. By defining genres as social activity, *The Call to Write* also suggests that genres are not stable categories of writing. They change to reflect social history. To better appreciate this, you might have students compare a memoir from, say, the 19th century to one written more recently.

2. Trimbur calls memoir “memory-work.” In this way, one might think of the subject of memoir as, in part, memory itself. Memory, of course, is fallible. You might ask students to write a brief account of an event from the past. Like letters, students may not think of the memoir as particularly rhetorical. Therefore, have them consider how they might produce memoir, what they would like their readers to think or feel, and how the memoir would best achieve its intentions.

**CHAPTER 6**
PUBLIC DOCUMENTS: CODIFYING BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Corporate and Institutional Websites as Public Documents” has students link to the McDonald’s corporate site, comparing claims about itself compared with the view expressed on the Social Responsibility link.

2. An exercise called “Public Documents and the Freedom of Information Act” takes students to a State Department site and the Ralph Nader site. Students could discuss what it means to exist in the information age and the challenges involved in being informed.

3. Informative and timely links to the National Commission on Election Reform, the Illinois Institute of Technology’s Center for the Study of Ethics, and many more.
In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Perhaps more so than with other genres, the variety of what we might call public documents is considerable. You might have students give some thought to why one might study what de Castell refers to as “documentary texts” in a composition course.

2. If we accept that public documents shape social organization, then we must consider that even most fact-based document both reflects and reinforces society’s values. You might ask students to find some examples such documents and have them describe what they indicate about our cultural beliefs and practices.

CHAPTER 7
PROFILES: CREATING A DOMINANT IMPRESSION

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Celebrity Websites as Profiles” links students to websites for the artist Beck. One is his official website, the others are fan sites. You could invite students to examine the fan sites in particular and analyze them as profiles.

2. An exercise called “Comparing Websites and Narrative Profiles” looks at two profiles of the hip-hop performer Eminem and asks students to compare the differences in strategy behind them. In doing so, you might have students focus more on how the differences in context and technology account for the differences they uncover.

3. Links not only to profiles of people, but organizations as well, such as the Pan American Health Organization.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:
1. Profiles are an ubiquitous genre and students typically get involved in producing them. Students could consider what social and cultural conditions have made this genre so popular. On the other hand, you might ask students to consider how subjects for profiles are available to us in our immediate surroundings. Students could brainstorm a list of potential ideas and for each possibility discuss what makes this person interesting or unique.

2. Profiles raise ethical issues in a direct way because the subject is often a person. Therefore, profiles raise the issue of representation. As students consider their approach to their profiles, they may also need to consider their assumptions about their subject, particularly if this person belongs to a social category to which the student may not have been fully exposed.

CHAPTER 8
FAQs, FACT SHEETS, BROCHURES, AND WEBSITES: INFORMING AND EXPLAINING

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Comparing FAQs with More Extended Forms of Writing on the Web” in which students may link to the PETA site (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) and examine the FAQ link there. Another site links to a lengthier report entitled “Vegetarianism and Human Health.” Student could compare the format of the FAQ to that of the report to determine the advantages and disadvantages of either form.

2. An exercise called “Considering Online Forms of Writing for your Own Project” in which students may investigate the Buffalo Field Campaign as an example of online writing with a clear purpose. This link should demonstrate to students how the design and graphics of online writing reflects the values and beliefs of the writer(s).
3. An exercise called “Building Your Own Website” offering links to online guides for how to construct websites. Many students already know hypertext markup language, which provides the means to create hypertext documents. Still, you might ask students to compare different guides to appreciate the differences in what they emphasize.

4. Principles for communicating online and aspects of what we might call “visual literacy.”

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. In small groups, have students collect the web pages for a variety of sites and evaluate their effectiveness. For example, students might assess the web page on the basis of its accessibility for users. How easy is it to download? Are graphics, etc., readable in different platforms? What is the relationship between visual and textual elements?

2. As Trimbur says in *The Call to Write*, “The design of information is a crucial aspect of informing and explaining.” It is important to emphasize that the genres reflected in this chapter are in themselves an indication of the changing nature of information, our need for it, and how we consume it. Students benefit greatly by producing these assignments particularly because the rhetorical elements of these documents may be readily apparent.

CHAPTER 9
COMMENTARY: IDENTIFYING PATTERNS OF MEANING

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “A Cluster of Commentaries on a Single Issue” links to the Common Dreams sites and makes available a vast array of positions on issues. Students might meditate on the conditions that have made commentary such a popular genre. Keeping in mind the
complex nature of genres, ask students to bring to class a variety of examples of what be thought of as commentary.

2. An exercise called “Editorials and Other Kinds of Commentary” picks up on the suggestion above pointing more specifically to commentaries as they appear in newspapers. Students might select a few examples of editorials by a small group of writers and, from this information, determine the editorial slant of each writer.

3. Numerous links on an endless variety of issues reflecting a full spectrum of positions and rhetorical stances. Particularly interesting is the link to David Bouchier’s *Audio Essays*.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Commentaries are a familiar genre in journalism, both print and broadcast. In fact, students may think of this genre in particular as something that only professional journalists produce. Yet all of us have stake in the “desire to analyze and explain what happens around us,” as Trimbur suggests, and therefore it is contingent upon ordinary people to identify patterns of meaning for themselves. Commentaries differ from, say, letters to the editor in that commentaries have a more pointed democratic function, according to Trimbur: “...holding accountable those in power....” In doing so, commentaries carry with them the added ethical burden involved in speaking to the motives of others. You might prepare students to write commentaries by exploring these issues.

2. Commentaries, as Trimbur points out, speak to events, trends, and ideas. Ask students to collect examples of commentaries dealing with each of these subjects, so that they may appreciate the variety of forms this genre takes.
CHAPTER 10
PROPOSALS: FORMULATING AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Relating Proposals to Online Requests for Proposals” suggests that students use a search engine, keyword “RFP,” to investigate the types of calls that exist surrounding proposals. You might ask students to consider what an overview of RFPs might suggest social concerns.

2. An exercise called “Online Proposal Writing Guides” offers a link to a short course in proposal writing and a practical guide. You might ask students to compare these guidelines to the information conveyed in Chapter 10 of the text.

3. Links to sites, such as Speak Out and Wired, which actively engage many of the problems of the day.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Students would benefit by gathering a list of problems needing solutions. They might begin by considering matters of concern in their local communities, or even campus issues, such as parking, or something local but with national import, such as hate speech. Students could form into small groups, choose one issue and discuss the problem and the different perspectives on it.

CHAPTER 11
REVIEWS: EVALUATING WORKS AND PERFORMANCES

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise representing movie reviews by having students visit Roger Ebert’s site. The exercise provides questions about Ebert’s reviews
that should help students apply principles expressed by Trimbur in this chapter of *The Call to Write*.

2. An exercise that links to a “how-to” guide as well as other links to journals such as the AIDS Book Review Journal.

3. An exercise called “Reviews from the Mainstream, Reviews from the Fringe” has students to analyze the differences between more popular reviews and those to which readers may be less exposed.

4. Several sites, such as newspaper and popular culture, giving students ready access to a wide variety of reviews.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. This chapter in *The Call to Write* suggests that since we live in a consumer culture, and are therefore consuming all kinds of products, we have an ongoing need to evaluate. The products in our society come not only packaged in boxes, but arrive to us as vehicles, CDs, videos, movies, television shows, books, and so forth. Because of the bewildering array of products in our society, and the sometimes predatory nature of advertising, the need to evaluate them is critical. You might begin your work with this chapter by asking students to collect reviews. Emphasize that they should come from a variety of sources and represent different purposes.

2. As an in-class activity, you might practice the act of criteria-building by discussing one product or object and attempting to create consensus on how it might be evaluated. This activity should underscore that evaluative criteria are always a matter of values. As students come up with criterion, ask them to unpack their rationales.

3. Assign reviews of online exhibitions, such as those found at museums like the Smithsonian.
CHAPTER 12
A CASE STUDY OF A WRITING ASSIGNMENT

The companion website provides the following:

1. Links to tips, tools, and resources for writers, such the Ewritery site at the University of Missouri and the University of Maine’s Writing Center. The purpose of this chapter is to instill in students the concept that writers use many resources, including human resources, as they negotiate writing tasks and assignments.

2. A link to Eserver.org at the University of Washington. This addresses online publishing. Also, a link to Writing Tips with 1 Click.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Have students write a review of a writer’s resource site, using the approach to reviews discussed in Chapter 11 of *The Call to Write*.

2. Choose your favorite “how I write” essay and discuss it in class. The have students write a similar piece and conduct a whole-class discussion of the various ideas about writing processes reflected in the students’ essays.

3. You might consult *Small Groups in Writing Workshops: Invitations to a Writer’s Life* by Brooke, Mirtz, and Evans for insight into how students may work together on writing assignments.

CHAPTER 13
WORKING TOGETHER: COLLABORATIVE WRITING PROJECTS

The companion website provides the following:
1. A Student Web Gallery at the University of Texas at Austin showcases student web pages, under the “Projects” link.

2. A page created for writing instructors who want to create a collaborative writing assignment.

3. An exercise called “Reflecting Online Collaboration” containing a link to a collaborative report and to the Intercollegiate Electronic Democracy Project (IEDP).

4. An exercise called “Sites for Online Collaboration” and a link to a collection of web pages indexed at Project Renaissance at SUNY, Albany.

5. Links to a host of collaborative activities and online projects.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. One of the most extended discussions of collaborative writing is *Singular Texts/Plural Authors: Perspectives on Collaborative Writing* by Lunsford and Ede.

2. Have students produce a case study of the collaborative learning and writing practices of a particular social, academic, or professional group.

**CHAPTER 14
THE FORM OF NON-FICTION PROSE**

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Comparing Writing Advice Online” in which students may analyze the differences between the Hypertext Writer’s Guide at the University of Victoria and the Better Writing website.
2. An exercise that invites students to explore online handbooks, determine which ones might be most useful to them, and ask what function they might serve for them and others in other writing situations.

3. A selection of web resources, such as the well-known Purdue University Online Writing Lab.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. The information in Chapter 14 is beneficial in many contexts, particularly in college classes in a variety of subjects. You might ask students to choose a writing assignment from one of their courses, discuss the approach taken to the assignment, the comments and grade (optional) received, and the criteria for success. In what ways is Trimbur's advice in the chapter consistent with the demands of that assignment?

2. Advice about nonfiction prose has its own interesting history. You could share some of that history by asking students to do research on textbooks going back perhaps a few decades. How has the view of effective or “good” writing evolved? You might consult The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College, 1875-1925 by Brereton for further information on this subject.

CHAPTER 15
COMMUNICATING ONLINE: WRITING IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL LITERACY

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Evaluating Your Tools” invites students to access the Windows 95 Annoyances site to record their impressions of the kind of communication found there. What do students sense about the users of this sight? What language conventions do they deploy?
2. An exercise called “Expanding Your Repertoire” asks students do an inventory or an audit of their knowledge of writing technologies. In doing so, students might also set goals for gaining further knowledge.

3. Online resources, such as Hypertext Brochure and Online Etiquette, which illustrate the nature of writing in cyberspace.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Create a listserv for your class and encourage students to use it. It is a practical way to extend certain conversations when you run out of time in class. Also, it is an excellent way to help build a sense of community.

2. In a chat space, hold an occasional online “café” session with your students to discuss their progress in the course.

3. Using email, encourage your students to submit drafts of their essays to each other online.

CHAPTER 16
RESEARCH PROJECTS: USING PRINT AND ELECTRONIC SOURCES

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Purposeful Research” suggests that students keep a log of their research process. The purpose of this exercise is more than a matter of keeping a working bibliography. Such a log should help students gain a more strategic sense of their research process.

2. An exercise called “Develop and Share Your Expertise” calls for students to investigate search engines and develop research guidelines others could use.
3. Provides the link to Tech Encyclopedia and has students evaluate its web page and the functionality of this site relative to other online encyclopedias.

4. A link called Evaluating Internet Sources.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. In this chapter, Trimbur lists several of the most popular search engines available. Students will want to link to these sites to develop their research questions. Suggest they, preliminarily, visit several sites to compare their design.

2. Just as Trimbur suggests that students write proposals to test the feasibility of their research plan, you might also ask for progress reports from students. For both the proposals and progress reports, have students develop criteria for gauging effective documents such as these.

CHAPTER 17
FIELD RESEARCH

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Conducting Field Research Online” asks students to consider which kinds of issues would benefit by visiting the virtual communities that appear on MOOs, MUDs, listservs, newsgroups, etc.

2. An exercise suggesting that students consider conducting online interviews as part of their research. The exercise also makes recommendations for several research issues that pertain to the Web itself.

3. Links to the discussion sites such as Tile.net, MediaMoo, and others.

5. A link to the Writing Center at Colorado State University that gives an overview of many research methods, with a focus on integrating field research with other methods.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Consult the link to the interview with the movie critic Roger Ebert. Compare this interview, or any other online interviews one might encounter, and compare it to a print-based interview. What are the primary differences in how the interviews are framed or presented? What are the advantages or disadvantages of one medium over another in the context of interviews?

CHAPTER 18
RESEARCH PAPERS: USING MLA, APA, AND COS STYLES

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Entering a Conversation” asks students to enter the Burkean parlor by having them link to an online article noting the various perspectives that have contributed to it through the hyperlinks.

2. Information on plagiarism, such as the policy statements of Augustana College and Bowling Green State University; a definition of “intertextuality” located at the Uvic Writers Guide.

3. An activity that looks at citation as rhetorical practice; the exercise links to two articles that encourage students to analyze the variety of reasons why authors cite.
4. Links to the official APA site.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. Have students write an analysis comparing two or three documentation styles. In their analysis, you might ask students to draw some conclusions to explain the variations and what those they reflect about the different communities that use those styles.

**CHAPTER 19**

**VISUAL DESIGN**

1. An exercise called “Examining Web Page Design” links to Web Pages That Suck.com where students will find examples of both effective and not so effective designs.

2. An exercise called “Practicing Web Page Design” links to the web page for Web Design Resources, and asks students to begin sketching their own web page designs.

3. An exercise called “The Relationship Between Content and Design” in which students compare the New York Times site with the MSNBC site and attempt to explain what their respective design features represent about the two communication organizations.

4. A link to a professional designer of web resumes.

5. A link to a clip art site.

6. Links to other sites as descriptive models.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:
1. Have students collect a folder containing examples of flyers, newsletters, brochures, and web pages. Discuss a few of the design principles Trimbur outlines; that is, how do proximity, alignment, repetition, and contrast function for each genre represented in this chapter.

2. Have students to an ethnographic study of the types of documents produced at a workplace site with a mind toward discovering how the approach to document design is reflect that organization’s mission.

**CHAPTER 20 ESSAY EXAMS**

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Preparing for Essay Exams” invites students to link to sites dealing with test anxiety available at university online writing lab sites.

2. An exercise called “Practicing Essay Exams” suggests that students practice exams online with peers through the use of chat rooms.

3. Links to sites such as Ten Traps of Studying, Test Anxiety, and Coping with Writing Anxiety.

4. A link to the study skills site for Georgia College and State University, and other helpful sites.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. It may be true that students who do well on certain types of exams because they are familiar with them; that is, they understand the exam as a specific genre. To help students produce better exams, it would be useful to begin gathering old exams from your English colleagues and those in other disciplines and explore what these exams reflect
about different subject areas. Apply the information in *The Call to Write* to each context.

CHAPTER 21
WRITING PORTFOLIOS

The companion website provides the following:

1. An exercise called “Examining Online Portfolios” offers links to online portfolios produced by high school and college students representing a vast array of the available technologies used to create them.

2. An exercise called “Preparing an Online Portfolio” with a heuristic to help students consider this task.

3. Information on electronic portfolios. There is also information regarding electronic portfolios in the “Using Portfolios” chapter of this manual.

4. An instructor’s link to a discussion on visual rhetoric.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following:

1. When approached in certain ways, structuring your syllabus around writing portfolios helps students to achieve some of the worthiest goals of a composition course. Portfolios encourage students to take greater ownership of their writing by affording them more control over how they will represent themselves and be evaluated. Student choice also allows for more variety in student writing and therefore cultivate students’ different strengths as writers.
CHAPTER 22
WORKING WITH SENTENCES

The companion website provides the following:

1. Access to the online editing resources offered by several online writing labs, such as the Online Writing Guide at the University of Wisconsin.

2. An exercise suggesting that students use online resources such as chats, MOOs, and email to collaborative editing networks.

3. Additional sources of handbook materials located at Writing Resources and Writing Link.

In addition to these activities and resources, you might consider the following.

1. Have students keep logs in which they catalog and categorize instances of the ten common sentence problems Trimbur outlines in Chapter 22.

2. One of the most useful books dealing with this subject is Style: Ten Lesson in Clarity and Grace by Williams. It contains many effective exercises one might use in class or have students work on outside of class.
APPENDIX

SAMPLE SYLLABI

The following syllabi and course schedules may aid you in considering how you will structure your course. As you read through the course schedules, please keep in mind that the page numbers will not correspond accurately to those in The Call to Write; these instructors were teaching from pre-publication copies of The Call to Write, and the pagination changed when the book was later published.

SYLLABUS 1 (Karen A. Hodges, TCU)

TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

ENG 2803  INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Karen A. Hodges
Writing in Communities Office: Reed. 217
Section 70, "Writing to Make a Difference" Office Hours: Wed. 4:30-5:30
FALL 1998  & by appointment
3:00-4:15, MW. Reed Hall 103 E-Mail: khodges@flash.net

SYLLABUS

Course description

ENGLISH 2803
INTERMEDIATE COMPOSITION: WRITING IN COMMUNITIES. Prerequisite: English 1803 and sophomore standing (24 semester hours). Strategies for adjusting one's writing to a variety of tasks, genres, contexts, and audiences. The course also teaches research techniques, with an
emphasis on identifying sources that are valuable to a given community and building an argument from them. Course activities include critical reading, collaborative writing and editing, and revising for style.

THIS SECTION OF ENGLISH 2803 will focus on "Writing to Make a Difference." Thus a literacy narrative will begin the semester as students write a memoir, "Making a Difference in Self." The second focus, argument, will result in persuasive writing, "Making a Difference in the Community." "Making a Difference in the Academy" will culminate in a researched, expository essay. And a team project that includes a collaboratively written proposal document, "Making a Difference in Government," will conclude the semester. Dr. Hodges will conference with each student individually or in small groups throughout the semester.

Required texts


College Dictionary. (Paperback or hard cover. Published 1995-Present)

Tutoring

The faculty of English 2803 encourage students to seek additional personal instruction and tutoring at the William L. Adams Writing Center, 100 Rickel Building. The Writing Center staff (professional writing tutors as well as trained peer tutors) can help with composing a specific paper or with developing students' general writing skills. There is no charge for Writing Center tutoring. The William L. Adams Writing Center endorses the following Statement of Ethics:

A text should reflect the student's own work and efforts; thus tutors do not write any portion of a student's paper.

For the same reason, tutors do not proofread what a student has written.

Tutors do not guarantee a particular grade or even suggest what grade a student is likely to receive on an assignment.

Tutors do not criticize an instructor's assignment.
Tutors do not assist students with take-home exams or final portfolios. Students in English 2803 who receive tutoring, formal or informal, from individuals or programs other than the William L. Adams Writing Center are responsible for assuring that the tutoring adheres to these ethical standards. Students whose tutoring exceeds these ethical standards violate the university's code on academic misconduct and are subject to its penalties.

**Students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities should consult the Coordinator of Academic Services for Students with Disabilities, who will provide course instructors with guidelines for accommodating the students' special needs.

**Grading**

Effort and class participation: Writing is a skill that requires practice. Practicing writing through revisions, tutoring, and collaboration typically leads to marked improvement in one's written texts. Talking about ideas with others--including taking part in class discussions--is another way of improving one's writing. For these reasons, students in Writing Workshops are encouraged to take part in class discussions, to revise their drafts, to seek advice from others, and to offer advice to other writers. Effort and class participation, though, are not intended as primary products of Writing Workshops and are therefore not graded components of English 2803. Nor should students expect a direct correlation between the effort expended on a paper and the grade received for it: the effects of effort and class participation are typically more diffused, leading to an overall improvement in writing skills whose effects cannot be reliably predicted for any specific writing event.

Patchwriting: When following the language of a source text, students are expected to use fresh words and fresh sentence structures. (See handbook section 49b2.) Inadequate paraphrase customarily results in a lowered grade for the paper and may also result in a required ungraded revision.
English 2803 papers are graded according to the instructor's judgment of the overall quality of the manuscript, taking into account how well it fulfills the assignment; to what extent it demonstrates the principles taught in the course or expected of students entering the course; how effectively it communicates with its audience; to what extent it engages its reader's imagination and understanding how easily it can be read and comprehended (reading ease is affected by factors such as organization, grammatical correctness, and the physical appearance of the manuscript); and how well developed it is.

Papers submitted by all students in English 2803 are subjected to these criteria. Accommodations for students' special needs are made in instruction, not in evaluation.

Because revision is an integral part of the writing process and an essential part of improving one's writing, students are encouraged to write multiple drafts of their assigned papers. Once a paper has been graded in English 2803, it may not be revised for an improved grade. When teachers include in their syllabus an assignment in which the entire class revises a previous paper, that assignment will constitute a new grade in the course, not a replacement for or a revision of a previous grade.

Assignments for the course will receive the following percentage values:
- 15% Genre paper 1, Literacy Narrative (3-5 pages)
- 20% Genre paper 2, Argument (5-7 pages)
- 10% In-class midterm examination (essay, 3-5 pages)
- 25% Research paper (8-10 pages)
- 15% Team project: Collaborative essay, proposal (7-10 pages)
- 15% In-class final examination (essay, 4-6 pages)
- 100%

Graded papers will receive the following point values:
- 4.33 A+
- 4.0 A
- 2.33 C+
- 2.0 C
3.66 A- 1.66 C-
3.33 B+ 1.33 D+
3.0 B 1.0 D
2.66 B- 0.66 D-
0 F

The point value for each paper will be multiplied by its percentage value; these, added together, constitute the grade for the course, which will be calculated on the following scale:

At least 3.66 = A for the course
At least 2.66 = B for the course
At least 1.66 = C for the course
At least 0.66 = D for the course
Less than 0.66= F for the course

**Late papers**

Late papers in English 2803 will be penalized one letter grade for each class period beyond the due date. Late papers will not be penalized (a) if the student had an official university absence and (b) if the course instructor has agreed to late submission in advance of the due date.

---OR---
(c) if the Campus Life Office verifies that extraordinary circumstances prevented the student's submitting the paper on schedule and (d) if the Campus Life Office verifies that extraordinary circumstances prevented the student's giving the instructor advance notice that the paper would be late.

**Attendance policy**

In English 2803, only official university absences and verified absences are excused. Each instructor will determine what constitutes a "verified" absence for that section; usually it will be unavoidable, emergency absences to which the Campus Life Office can attest. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the instructor receives Campus Life verification of absences. Students in English 2803 who accumulate three weeks' unexcused absences will automatically fail the course. Preparation for class and timely
arrival in class are expected as part of your obligation to attend class. Class preparation will be determined in part by your in-class journal responses to assigned readings.

**Academic misconduct**

The Department of English expects its students to adhere to the university's code of student conduct, especially as it pertains to academic misconduct. (For the university's policies on academic misconduct, see 3.4 of the Code of Student Conduct, which is reproduced in the *TCU Calendar Handbook*. The following explanations and departmental policies are intended to help students interpret the university's code as it applies to work in English classes:

Ghostwritten papers: In English classes, ghostwriting is defined as the appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. The unacknowledged use of "study guides" such as Cliffs Notes or Monarch Notes in the preparation of English papers is a form of ghostwriting. (Even when acknowledged, such study guides are too rudimentary to be appropriate secondary sources for a college paper, and thus will typically result in a reduced grade for the paper. Students wishing help in interpreting a literary source should consult the instructor for some suggested interpretive readings.) Cases of ghostwriting will be referred to the Dean of the AddRan College of Arts and Sciences with the recommendation that the student be removed from the course with a grade of "F."

Unacknowledged collaboration: Students are expected to cite both written and oral sources; when others (tutors, classmates, friends, etc.) collaborate on their papers, the author of record should acknowledge those collaborators' contributions. Papers that do not cite or acknowledge oral collaboration will be classified as inadequately cited papers and will be subject to the same range of penalties.
CALENDAR

DISCLAIMER: This calendar is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate instructional and/or student needs. Your presence in class ensures correct reading assignments. Come to class prepared to answer and ask questions on the reading assignments. Additional information and detailed schedules on essay units will be dispersed in a timely manner.

Mon., Aug. 24: Pick up Syllabus

Making a Difference in Self
Wed., Aug. 26: Course Introduction
Read the following: Syllabus; Aaron "Preface" & 49c; Trimbur, "Introduction." In class writing (last 45 minutes).

(Each listed assignment should be read, reread, annotated & prepared for discussion before class. Then you'll be ready for class participation.)

Mon., Aug. 31: Open book grammar drill (Aaron);
Read: Trimbur: Ch. 1 through Nike advertisement
Exchange in-class writing to annotate, comment, and write a 1/2- to 1-page response.
TEAM PROJECT Intro. See Trimbur Ch. 13

Wed., Sept. 2: Bring dictionary for approval
Read: Aaron, Sections 7a-d--"Paragraphs";
Trimbur Ch. 1 "Writing in the Public Sphere"

Mon., Sept 7: Labor Day Holiday

Wed., Sept. 9: Read Aaron, Ch. 40--"Conventions of Form & Appearance"
In class--Grammar drill from Aaron using early writing glitches
Read Trimbur, Ch. 1--"Writing Assignment & Directions"
Mon., Sept. 14: Read Aaron, Ch. 56--"Letter, Memo, fax, & e-mail." [A 1/2-page memo will accompany each assignment submitted for instructor's evaluation.]

**Peer review Paper #1--typed draft**

Wed., Sept. 16: Read Aaron, Ch. 41-46--"Mechanical Correctness"

**Paper #1, Literacy Narrative Due--15% course grade**

**TEAM PROJECT: Discuss Proposals. Select teams.**

Sign up for conferences???

**Making a Difference in Community**

Mon., Sept. 21: Read Aaron Part II. "Clarity and Style," Sec. 8-13 for seven- to ten-minute group presentations that include exercise or illustration

Read: Trimbur, p. 63 "Distinguishing Facts and Claims"-- p. 87

Sign up for conferences

Wed., Sept. 23: Aaron Presentations: 8, 9, 10

Read Trimbur Ch. 3 & prepare "Working Together" p. 95

Bring TCU newspaper, *The Skiff*, to class.

Mon., Sept. 28: Aaron Presentations: 11, 12a, 12b

Invention for Genre Paper #2, Argument, pp. 109-10

Wed., Sept. 30: Aaron Presentations: 13

Bring list of your claim and each part of your argument (Trimbur p. 119 and 140).

**TEAM PROJECT: Short team meeting**

Mon., Oct. 5: Read: Trimbur, collaborative ex. pp. 117-19

Typed Draft due for Peer review

Wed., Oct. 7: Read: Aaron, Ch. 23

Due: Genre Paper #2, Argument--20% course grade

Making a Difference in the Academy

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Mon., Oct. 12: Read: Aaron Ch. 21 & 22  
Trimbur: Ch. 19 "Essay Exam"  
TEAM PROJECT: Discuss primary research tool(s)--interview, questionnaire, survey, etc.

Wed., Oct. 14: Read Aaron Ch. 25-27, "Pronouns"  
Mid-semester: In class essay, 3-5 pgs. 10% course grade

Mon., Oct. 19: Mid-Semester Deficiency Grades Posted  
Introduce Research Project.  
Read: Trimbur, Ch. 8 "Reports: Informing and Explaining"  
TEAM PROJECT: Focus Topic due--5% proposal grade  
Due: 1st & 2nd choice topic: either a topic we have read about, or a topic we will cover during the rest of the semester.  
Read: Trimbur, Ch. 8 to "Felson & Gmelch." Scan pp. 454-59?

Mon., Oct. 26: Aaron Glossary "E-H"--extemporaneous illustrations  
Due: Ex. 1 and 2 (Trimbur Ch. 8)  
Read: Trimbur, p. 436; "Harrington," p. 441

Wed., Oct. 28: Meet in Library for secondary research  
Due: a Research Question, Trimbur p. 458


Wed., Nov. 4: Conferences with Dr. H

Mon., Nov. 9: Conferences with Dr. H

Wed., Nov. 11: Typed draft due for peer commentary

Mon., Nov. 16: Aaron Glossary "M-Q"--extemporaneous illustrations  
Research Project Due--8-10 pgs. Including Works Cited, 25% course grade
Making a Difference in Government
Wed., Nov. 18: Read: Trimbur, Ch. 10, pp. 545-49; 571-82; 583 ??

Mon., Nov. 23: Read: Trimbur, Ch. 10 "Designing the Document" pp. 585 -- ??

TEAM PROJECT: Progress Report Due--10% proposal grade
Maximum of two-page report required for each team--must attach samples of primary research tools (interview, questionnaire, etc.)


Thurs., Nov. 26-29: University Thanksgiving Break

Mon. Nov. 30: Discuss layout and design of team project

Wed., Dec. 2: Due: Individual written sections of proposal for peer review

Mon., Dec. 7: TEAM PROJECT: Proposal Document due--15% course grade

Wed., Dec. 9: Last Day of Class. Informal team project presentations of 15 minutes each

Fri., Dec. 18, 3:00-5:30. Final Exam--in class essay 4-6 pages, 15% course grade.
Welcome!

Welcome to your second composition course at TCU! The theme of this section of ENGL 2803 is Environmentalism. We will examine the players and the topics in ongoing debates about the environment so that we can participate as writers in discussions of controversial environmental issues within communities of your choice.

Keep this syllabus handy at all times; it contains both an explanation of your particular section of ENGL 2803 and the policies established by the English Department for all sections. Do ask questions if any parts of this document don't seem clear.

Aims of the course

As its official description states, this course--Writing in Communities--"teaches strategies for adjusting one's writing to a variety of tasks, genres, contexts, and audiences." Accordingly, our goals will be to become aware of the rhetorical nature of argument and to inquire how knowledge is created through writing based on research. In particular, we'll try to understand
what our position in a community has to do with our ability to offer an effective argument, and we'll examine how language is used in various genres of writing. We'll do this by reading and practicing academic writing through continued work on the course topic. This includes
   Reading other authors' writing actively and critically;
   Summarizing, paraphrasing, analyzing, and synthesizing sources;
   Practicing revision for focus and style;
   Collaborating on writing and editing;
   Practicing library and other research procedures;
   Citing and documenting sources according to academic conventions;
   Using a handbook to follow standards of correctness.

Texts


A college-level dictionary, such as:
   Webster's Tenth New Collegiate Dictionary,
   Webster's New World Dictionary, or
   the American Heritage Dictionary.

Additional Costs

For some of the papers, photocopies of cited sources will be required, and you will sometimes be asked to provide several copies of your drafts. Also, you may need 3.5" diskettes for computer use and a few plain manila folders. These expenses will be less than $15.00.
Course Activities

Class discussion of assigned readings and of selected controversial issues;
Research through interviews and library searches;
Informal oral reports on topics and research as needed;
Revision of drafts in groups and in conferences with the instructor;
In-class writing;
Meetings in and out of class with your collaborator(s);
Short lectures by the instructor

Assignments

Homework and class participation, including:
Readings from the course texts, from other students' work, and from sources you discover on your own;
An interview with a person who has experience with your chosen topic;
One or two oral mini reports as needed;
Writing exercises, done at home and in class. In-class writing cannot be made up. Collect all of these assignments in a plain manila folder that you will hand in on the next-to-last-day of the course;
Graded pieces of work (30-40 pages in all), including

A letter to an organization (5%);
A profile of an environmental group (20%);
A report or public document (20%);
A proposal (collaborative paper, 15%);
A review (20%);
One graded in-class essay (10%);
Final exam (10%).

Always include drafts when you hand in a paper.

You must complete all assignments in order to pass the course.
Paper format

Unless a genre requires a special format, type all graded assignments double-spaced, leaving a one-inch margin all around. In the upper right corner of page one, provide

Your name;
The kind of assignment;
The date (different for each draft);
The name of the course;
My name.

Very important: Number the pages (I mean it!).

Always include all drafts when you hand in a paper. Do not put your papers in any kind of folder. Just staple them together so that the final version sits on top. Label and number each draft.

Requirements for ungraded pieces will be announced.

Revision policy

To quite an extent, writing is learnable and teachable. In order to experience the growth and clarification of your ideas and the satisfaction coming from an improved paper, you are required to revise your first drafts, and you are invited to revise your papers further before they are graded. We will discuss and practice global and stylistic revision in class.

Grading

Final versions of papers will be graded on the use of the proper genre, the skillful adaptation to the intended audience, the clarity of the main point, the well-supported structure of the argument, the judicious use of sources, coherent sentence structure, and mastery of grammar, mechanics, and documentation.
To receive a high grade, a paper has to fulfill these criteria in an unusually competent manner. In particular, in order to receive an A, a paper will demonstrate both uncommon clarity and complexity of thought, structure, and style. A lower grade reflects the need of further practice in the cited areas.

Graded papers will receive the following point values:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.33</td>
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The point value for each paper will be multiplied by its percentage value; the sum of these products, divided by 100, will constitute the final grade for the course, which will be calculated on the following scale:

- At least 3.66 = A for the course
- At least 2.66 = B for the course
- At least 1.66 = C for the course
- At least 0.66 = D for the course
- Less than 0.66 = F for the course

**Conferences**

Several times during the semester, individual conferences will replace the regular class meetings. These will give each of you the opportunity to ask questions, to discuss ideas and concerns, and to receive custom-tailored comments on your writing.
Time management

The old rule of thumb is to spend two hours on homework for each hour spent in class. Try it.

Writing Center
  Location: 100 Rickel Building
  Hours: M-F, 8 a.m. 5 p.m.
  Phone: 921-7221

Special Accommodations

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information that I should know about, or if you need special consideration in case the building must be evacuated, please see me as soon as possible so we can make the necessary arrangements.

E-Mail

One good way to communicate with your classmates and with me is through e-mail. We'll exchange addresses as soon as possible. See me if you do not have an account yet.

Again

Welcome to Sophomore Composition. I look forward to our discussions and your writings.

Due dates for papers
  Letter:  September 9
  Report:  September 25
  Profile:  October 9
  In-class essay:  October 16
  Review:  November 9
  Proposal:  December 4
  Final exam:  December 16
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

(Short writing assignments and incidental readings will be announced as we go along. "CW" refers to The Call to Write by Trimbur, "LB" to The Little, Brown Compact Handbook by Aaron, "Env." to The Environment, edited by Sadler.)

Week 1, August 24, 26, 28
Introductions; overview of course texts; preparation for letter; read CW intro and Ch. 1 on writing, Ch. 4 on letters, Ch. 18 (557-558, 559-60) on letter design

Week 2, August 31, September 2, 4
Draft #1 of letter due August 31
Read Env. 97-112 on suburbia and lawns
Draft #2 of letter and draft of reflection due September 2
Read LB 4-7 on audience, 22-24 on revising, 26-28 on editing

Week 3, September 7, 9, 11
No class September 7--Labor day
Read LB 31-32, CW Ch. 12 on working together on own writings
Letter with reflection due September 9 (5%)
Start working on report and interview
Read LB 34-35, CW Ch. 14 (443-445) on word processing
Read CW Ch. 7 (238-239), Ch. 16 (506-510) on interviewing
Read Env. 75-92 on American lifestyle

Week 4, September 14, 16, 18
Read CW Ch. 3 on reading, Ch. 8 on reports
Draft of report due in class September 18
Early conferences September 18
**Week 5, September 21, 23, 25**

Work on revision of report  
Read LB 39-46, 51-54 on paragraphs  
Conferences September 21-23--No class meetings  
Report due in class September 25 (20%)

**Week 6, September 28, 30, October 2**

Read CW chapter 7 on profiles  
Read Env. 16-24 on environmental crisis

**Week 7, October 5, 7, 9**

Draft of profile due in class October 5  
Last day to withdraw from course: October 5  
Read Env. 54-62 on drinking water  
Profile due October 9 (20%)

**Week 8, October 12, 14, 16**

Read CW chapter 3 on persuasion  
In class: practice analyzing an argument  
In-class essay (Analysis) October 16 (10%)

**Week 9, October 19, 21, 23**

Read CW Ch. 11 on reviews  
No class October 23--Midsemester break

**Week 10, October 26, 28, 30**

Use LB to work on sentence structure  
Draft of review due October 30
Week 11, November 2, 4, 6
Study selected problems in LB
Conferences--no class meetings

Week 12, November 9, 11, 13
Review due November 9 (20%)
Read CW Ch. 10 on proposals, Ch. 13 on collaborative writing

Week 13, November 16, 18, 20
Read Env. Ch. 5 (153-200) on environmental protection
Draft #1 of proposal due in class November 20

Week 14, November 23, 25, 27
Work with partner(s) during class time November 23
Draft #2 of proposal due in class November 25
No class November 27--Thanksgiving

Week 15, November 30, December 2, 4
Work on revising proposal
Proposal due December 4 (15%)

Week 16, December 7, 9, 11
Manila folder with homework due December 7
In class: Practice analysis for final exam, December 7 and 9
Read CW Ch. 19 (595-604) on essay exams
No class December 11--Study day
Monday, December 14, 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Final Exam (Analysis, 10%)
SYLLABUS 3 (Salt Lake Community College)

English 2010
Intermediate Writing


Course Description:  This course aims to give you opportunities to develop your knowledge and practice of writing, particularly focusing on practical rhetorical knowledge. This means that you will take what you already know about writing--strategies for invention, for composing, for research and critical reading, for revision--in order to be able to meet new challenges, in the form of more complex writing assignments, where you put your academic knowledge about writing and writing practices into play in public, community settings. In this course, we will continue with many of the assumptions and practices of English 1010, such as small group work, informal and exploratory writing, reading and discussion; but you will have a great deal more responsibility and agency for your choices in terms of subject matter and genre as you write, given your greater knowledge and experience as a college-level writer.

Course Goals:  Student writers in English 2010 should be able to

Make choices in language that demonstrate awareness of the historical and cultural contexts of a writing situation, as well as make effective use of that awareness;
Display proficiency with a variety of writing strategies as they undertake complex writing tasks, and develop more self-awareness and command over their choices as writers;
Analyze the ways academic texts represent culture;
Develop deeper rhetorical knowledge of a particular topic, which entails writing within the conventions of a particular social conversation.
The above represents a recent statement of the department’s goals for English 2010. Additionally, we’ll examine and exploit the bridges and barricades between academic and public writing, with the goal of enlarging your abilities to write proficiently and usefully in both contexts. As a result of your serious work in this class, you should also learn to make effective use of many different knowledge-making strategies, including formal and field research methods.

**Course Methods:** As mentioned above, we will work within the learning traditions of composition classrooms, using peer groups, small group discussion, with many different kinds of reading and writing opportunities. The course makes a special point of you developing your capacity to research thoughtfully and rhetorically, so that by the time you leave this class, you should have a great deal more useful knowledge about how to find, evaluate, and use data, ideas, and other people’s writing for your own specific rhetorical purposes.

**Feedback and Grading:** During the first week of the class we will discuss my *Proposal for a Grading Contract*, which is attached. As a class we will decide if the criteria set out in the proposal are reasonable and appropriate for a college-level writing class. Once that contract is discussed, revised if necessary, and agreed upon, we will use it as the criteria for grading.

Throughout the quarter you will be doing informal, exploratory writing, as a means of developing your ideas and your rhetorical strategies for the formal written assignments. Informal, exploratory writing will most often be turned into me for comment and discussion, and will also be read and discussed by small peer groups, but will not receive a formal grade.

Three times during the semester, you will turn in a revised writing assignment, along with supporting materials that we as a class agree upon. I will also ask that you turn in your learning journal with these assignments (see below). These assignments I will comment on and will assign a “signal grade.” This signal grade will indicate to you the level at which I assess your reading and writing at that point in the semester. At
that time you will also receive a general assessment concerning how I believe you are doing in class given the criteria set out in the grading contract.

At the conclusion of the course, you will select and revise what you consider to be the work most representative of your best writing. For this final portfolio, you will have the opportunity to consult with me on matters of selection and revision. You will, as you have done before, write an analytic letter to “cover” the portfolio, explaining your selections and choices, as well as what the entire portfolio shows about your knowledge and practice as a writer. This final portfolio will also represent a significant portion of your grade (see below).

If at any point in the quarter you have questions or concerns about your grade or your standing in the class, you should contact me, either through an office consultation, a phone call, or an e-mail, to discuss those issues.

**Assignments:** We will organize our work around three major assignments. Each assignment will entail several pieces of writing, including exploratory writing, responses to readings, research notes, notes from peer review, heuristic work, and a learning journal. Each assignment will culminate in a more formal piece of writing, toward which all the other writing is aimed. In every case, you will have a great deal of choice in both the topic and the details of your formal piece. As an accompaniment to each writing assignment, I will ask for a statement of your learning--a letter addressed to me in which you interpret the work you did in writing the assignment, directing my attention to the most important aspects of your work.
With each assignment, you will always have the opportunity to frame “real-world” writing, and a special challenge: to write in a real community context that not only produces but also distributes knowledge in a way that is useful in the world. While you are never required to put your writing into actual circulation, you are always invited to do so. Whether you do this or not, I will support your efforts by giving you guidance in how to choose appropriate and viable topics, by critiquing your writing, by helping you find real-world contacts, and in any other ways that are within my abilities and resources.

Each writing assignment will be worth 25% of the course grade. The final portfolio is worth 20% of the course grade, with the additional 5% based on your attendance/participation/preparation.

**Learning Journal:** As part of your writing in the course, you’ll keep a reflective learning journal throughout the course. Please see the attachment for more about this assignment. We will negotiate the extent to which you need to write in this journal as part of the grading contract.

**Accommodations for Disabilities:** If you need accommodation, please talk with me and/or someone at the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at the beginning of the quarter or as soon as you are aware that accommodation is necessary. The DRC is in CC 230 or you can call them at 957-4659 (voice) or 957-4646 (TTY).
THE LEARNING JOURNAL

In the learning journal, you consider your learning in this class, particularly your learning about your reading and writing processes. One way to describe this work is as **metacognitive**. This word derives from two roots—*cognition*, or “the mental process or faculty of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgement”; and *meta*, or “beyond; more comprehensive; more highly developed.” One of the goals of the learning journal is for you to think about, become more knowing, about your own knowledge-making or learning. More simply put, the journal is a space for you to reflect on your learning; that is, on **how** your learning is occurring more than on **what** you are learning.

For instance, we will be study how different writers go about constructing arguments and entering into public discussions. In your journal you might reflect upon how you read the arguments of others, how that is different from other reading experiences, how it is similar, etc. Or you might identify what things we do in class that are particularly helpful to you, and what is not--and why. Or you might use the learning journal to sketch out your thinking about a particular issue, analyzing why you think that way as a precursor to more formal writing.

In short, the journal is a space for you to be reflective about your learning in an analytical and critical way—a place where you will be thinking about thinking.

**Nuts and Bolts**

In the beginning of the semester, I will provide you with many prompts for journal entries. As the semester goes on, these prompts will become less necessary as you find your own best ways to use the journal. When you turn in your formal writing assignments, you’ll turn in the journal too, so that I can provide comment and ask questions.
As I read through your journal, I won’t be looking for a certain amount of writing, but rather a certain level of engagement—regular entries that include reflection and analysis on the learning process you are going through. The amount of writing in the journal will vary from person to person, but the regularity with which I’d like you to use the journal should be apparent from the frequency of suggested journal prompts you receive in the first part of the semester. Most importantly, a critical level of engagement is required to meet the Grading Contract criteria for an A grade.

**Grading Contract Proposal**

The idea of the grading contract is similar to that of a job evaluation. To receive a certain grade your overall performance is evaluated. You are graded over the long term rather than in short, discrete pieces. I propose that the following criteria be used for assigning grades. We will discuss this as a class and determine whether or not these criteria are reasonable and agreeable to the class. The assumption here is that everyone starts in excellent (A) standing and that your work in class is your effort to maintain that excellent standing. Consequently, the criteria for an A are set out explicitly, with grades below an A due to performances that fall somewhat, to considerably, short of those criteria.

**To achieve an A in the class you must:**

- prepare fully for every class—have all reading done, writing accomplished, and be generally prepared to help the class or your group engage with the material for the day.
- participate actively in class—listen attentively to what others are saying (not just the teacher), respond respectfully to others’ ideas, be willing to offer your own suggestions on a regular basis, and inform the teacher or class of hindrances to participation.
- turn in all assignments at the appropriate time (exceptions can be negotiated as they arise, but must involve good reasoning and be discussed in a timely fashion).
• exhibit “A” level reading and produce “A” level writing in your journal, exploratory writings and formal assignments. What determines “A” level will be negotiated through assignments handouts and feedback from the teacher--in other words, we will develop a shared understanding of “A” level works as the semester proceeds.
• meet the criteria set out for the learning journals.
• miss no more than two classes (extreme exceptions can be dealt with on an individual basis).
• Be on time routinely--I will tell you if tardiness is becoming a problem.

To achieve a B, you will generally need to meet the criteria or an A, but with some inconsistencies. This inconsistency could happen in any area, but generally it shows up as not being prepared for every class (not having the reading done, not handing in assignments on time), writing projects that don’t meet all the assignment criteria, sporadic participation in class, or attendance and tardiness problems. The key here is that you are generally meeting the criteria for an A, but occasionally or in a particular area you are not.

To achieve a C, those inconsistencies would need to become more of a norm rather than an exception. Any of the inconsistencies listed above that become the typical way that you interact in class--writing that continually misses assignment criteria, little to know participation in class discussions, routinely late writing assignments, etc.--would result in a C grade.

I assume no one is striving for a D or an E since neither grade is acceptable on your transcript. Quite obviously you have to be consistently failing to meet the criteria (or ignoring them all together) to receive any of these grades. If at any time you are in danger of receiving one of these grades, I will ask you to talk with me to try to avoid that end.
English 2010  
Writing Assignment #1: A Letter with a Public Face

For this writing assignment, you will compose a letter. Your letter should focus on an issue that has public or community implications. To do this assignment, you will need to identify an issue that has both meaning to you—an issue, in other words, in which you’ll hear the call to write—and a public setting that you can research and analyze in order to write effectively.

The possibilities are, of course, myriad. Trimbur suggests many kinds of letters that you could write—a letter to a publication, such as a newspaper or magazine; a letter of appeal; a posting to an electronic discussion group. You are constrained only in that the letter must be public. It should not be aimed primarily at an intimate or private person or group. However, as Trimbur suggests, you will want to “find your own reasons and your own motivation to write. Make this assignment work for you. After all, here’s a chance to use the familiar form of the letter to something you’ve been wanting to do anyway”.

Schedule of Assignments, Activities, and Readings

Week 1

T   Introduction to Class
Th  Negotiating the Syllabus and Grading Contract; A Primer on Rhetoric

Week 2

Th  Read for class: Ch. 4, “Letters: Establishing and Maintaining Relationships”

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Week 3

T    Read Ch. 16, “Research Projects: Using Print and Electronic Sources,” and Ch. 17, “Field Research”
Th   Read Ch. 12, “Case Study of a Writing Assignment”; exploratory writing due in class for peer and instructor review

Week 4

T    Draft One of the letter due in class for peer and instructor review; Read Ch. 14, “The Form of Nonfiction Prose”
Th   Revising: a workshop

Week 5

T    Draft Two of the letter due in class for peer and instructor review; Read Chapter 22, pp. Xxx
Th   Peer and instructor review of cover letter; assembling a collection of your work for evaluation

Writing Assignment One is due in class on.
English 2010
Writing Assignment #2: New Writing Opportunities

For this writing assignment, you will write either: a piece of explanatory writing, such as a fact sheet, brochure, or website; a piece of commentary; or a proposal. Depending upon what your topic was for the first writing assignment, you may wish to keep the same topic. As in the first writing assignment, you will write in a public setting, but you may have a more nuanced understanding of your audience, greater knowledge about the topic, and therefore a different or more focused purpose, as well as a sense of new kinds of writing that you’d like to try to achieve a different aim.

The possibilities are, of course, myriad, as suggested by the range of options you have to consider--a fact sheet, a brochure, a website, a commentary, or a proposal. Within each of these broad types of writing, you have even more choices to make. Each of these genres may take many forms. Your task as a writer will be to think again about your writing situation: about your audience or audiences; your own place within the writing situation, and what you can credibly do by writing; what you’d like to achieve by writing; and what the best means for that would be. This writing assignment should give you the opportunity to extend your abilities and the repertoire of strategies you have available to you as a writer, writing in many situations.

As a companion piece, you will also write an annotated bibliography with rhetorical considerations. For this piece, you will introduce your topic and provide a summary account of your research materials, with special attention to the rhetorical features of the sources you’ve found, both individually and collectively. This piece, which exemplifies a fairly straightforward academic genre, should help you to think about the rhetorical world of your topic, and should help you make some practical choices about how best to use and to situate the sources you’ve found.
Writing Assignment #2: New Writing Opportunities
Schedule of Assignments, Readings, and Activities

Week 6

T Turn in assignment #1; assessment; new writing assignment

Th Read: Trimbur, Ch. 8, “Fact Sheets, Brochures, and Websites: Informing and Explaining”; exploratory heuristic

Week 7

T Read: Trimbur, Ch. 9, “Commentary: Identifying Patterns of Meaning”; peer response to exploratory writing

Th Read: Trimbur, Ch. 10, “Proposals: Formulating and Solving Problems”; bring two annotated sources to class

Week 8

T Read: Trimbur, Ch. 18, “Research Papers: using MLA, APA, and COS Styles”; heuristic for first draft

Th Read: Trimbur, Ch. 19, “Visual Design,” and Ch. 15, “Communicating Online: Writing in the Age of Digital Literacy”; peer and instructor response to first draft; revision workshop; handout on annotated bibliographies

Week 9

T Second draft for peer/instructor review; conferences

Th Conferences

Week 10

T Annotated Bibliography: draft for peer and instructor review; selected sections of Ch. 22
Th   Cover letter: draft for peer and instructor review; selected sections of Ch. 22

Writing Assignment #2 is due in class on March 27.
Writing Assignment #3: A Collaborative Public Writing Campaign

In this assignment, you will work with one or more other writers to develop pieces of writing on a single topic, with a public aim. This set of pieces of writing will represent your collective rhetorical knowledge of a topic, will create knowledge resources for that topic, and will enter the public discussion of the topic in some substantive ways. Your work should be ambitious, commensurate with what you should know from having worked through the first two assignments.

Each collaborative group will be responsible to create the following two items:

An annotated bibliography. This piece of writing, with its genre roots in the academic world, should provide your readers with a substantive selection of, and commentary upon, sources on your topic. It will likely include both print and electronic sources. The criteria of your work here should be that the selection of readings is inclusive and comprehensive; that it be substantive; and that you provide a context for each piece and for the bibliography as a whole in the form of commentary and background. Note: you may find that, if you are working in electronic formats for the whole project, you may want to develop an electronic bibliography, with links.

A researched essay (commentary, website, FAQ, pamphlet, review). You should, in developing the overall writing campaign, think about what genre might best serve the readership you seek, be most persuasive within the social/rhetorical situation, and within which you might write most persuasively yourselves, as students, citizens, stakeholders. The criteria for the guide should be that it is comprehensive (anyone who looks at the guide should be able to get a thumbnail sketch of the issues and stakeholders, the key evidences and arguments, and so forth); that it is likely to be read by the audience; and that it addresses the real needs of the audience (i.e., that it is rhetorical).
Note: again, if your overall project has an electronic format, you’ll want to pay special attention to the features of electronic writing that will support your rhetorical aims.

The two above documents could be integrated together in one format, such as a website; but there is no compelling reason why they must be so integrated.

In addition to the above two required assignments, your group should develop other pieces of public writing, given your interests and analysis of the topic. Such pieces might include a letter to some public agency, alerting the agency to the website or research you’ve done; a profile of the topic for a specific publication; a letter to the editor of a newspaper; an FAQ or pamphlet of some kind, again aimed at a particular audience; and the like. The same criteria for public writing that have held for your writing up to this point still apply--these pieces must be fully rhetorical and deeply knowledgeable about the topic and your audience(s).
English 2010, Assignment 3: A Collaborative Public Writing Campaign
Schedule, with Reading Assignments, Discussion topics, and Activities

Week 11

T  Intro. to Writing Assignment; Topic Selection; Ch. 13, “Working Together: Collaborative Writing Projects”; ground rules
Th Students meet in groups to begin discussion of/development of topic; Read Ch. 11, “Reviews: Evaluating Works and Performances”

Week 12

T  Generating goals; planning/describing parts of assignment; invention of specific pieces of public writing; developing a research plan; dividing the labor; deciding on the nature of collaboration
Th Consultation with instructor (groups not consulting with me working on your own)

Week 13

T  Group work; Instructor Consultations
Th  Group work; Instructor Consultations

Week 14

T  Group work; Instructor Consultations
Th  Group work; Instructor Consultations

Assignment 3 due in class, with collaborative cover letter, on April 24.
Week 15

T        Re-read chapter 21, “Writing Portfolios”; bring to class copies of all previous work done in this class; invention for final portfolio; invention for final assessment
Th      Consultations with instructor; work with peers for portfolio assessment and commentary

Week 16

T        Consultations with instructor; work with peers for portfolio assessment
W        Reading Day: I will be available in my office from 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Th      No class: I will be available in my office from 8:30 a.m.-noon (or other times by appointment)
Final period (to be confirmed) for in-class presentations. Final portfolio due at this time.
Notes for teaching the SLCC Syllabus

Before launching into the assignments, some sundry notes about important terms/concepts:

This course, as we have designed it, is topic/issue driven. The course, however, at every turn stresses the rhetorical nature of every act of language, including those concerning topics and issues. This means, among other things, that the topic is not merely a subject to investigate through research and construct through writing. The topic is, rhetorically speaking, a social space in some public world, where real people with different beliefs and ideologies and commitments and stakes engage one another in acts of language. Even that account of the act of writing should point to the rhetorical nature of the task: we aim for students to think of audiences not as static, but as fluid constituencies that every writer, in every act of writing, must construct and construct again, attempting to approximate the beliefs and commitments of an audience as a means of making appeals to that audience. Issues, likewise, do not come from some abstract world of issues—“issueland,” we sometimes call it. Issues, as the word itself suggests, come forth--issue--from particular topics, or social spaces or sites, as a result of the real conflicts and ideological clashes that exist there among the people and institutions that struggle for space and voice there.

Thus, when students are finding, developing, and exploring topics and issues, we see the role of the instructor as encouraging this rhetorical turn: the heuristic activities of topic development, of rhetorical investigation, of research, should avail students of new and multiple opportunities to construct, and reconstruct, their sense of audience, of the social site, and of their own place in it as they write and attempt to write.

A word or two about research: Again, we are most interested in stressing research first as a kind of invention, and second, as
deeply rhetorical. Practically, what this means is that students should be helped to interrogate their probably deeply held understandings about research—that it is about sources piling up, however conscientiously documented; that it is purely finding out about a topic. Instructors should give students the opportunity to research rhetorically—to begin to construct a working fiction of the stakeholders in a particular social site, to construct versions of the arguments and evidences of those stakeholders; to revisit their research and to question and revise their earlier working fictions and accounts of the site as they reconsider their own roles in the writing situation. What is critical for students in a writing class is to conceive of the act of researching as fully rhetorical. While students should become more familiar with and proficient at using the apparatus of academic research, citation and documentation, including newer electronic forms of research, it is equally important that the class provide a context for that research, wherein students can formulate and reformulate their ideas about the audiences of their texts, and that their research provide the heuristic material from which this rhetorical understanding can emerge. Above all, students should not retain the view of research as “information,” which suggests some sort of self-evident value—the belief that information is valuable simply because it is information. Students should understand that source material only has rhetorical value as it is selected, understood critically, and deployed purposefully within a social context by a writer.

Finally, a word about evaluation: This course is structured so that students will have many opportunities to do many different kinds of writing—exploratory writing, public writing with a civic edge, public writing with an academic edge, and so forth. We strongly believe that writing courses should give students as many, and as diverse, opportunities as possible, and our design reflects this belief. However, we are sensitive to the question of evaluation, particularly the ways that instructors may be burdened by the many different pieces of writing, successive drafts, journals, and so forth. Herewith, our thoughts about how to handle this.

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First, we encourage you to allow for the full range of student writing—that is, we encourage you to have your students do all the writing. But second, we encourage you to think about your reading priorities when you respond to student writing. For instance, when you read early drafts of student work, you will be looking for very different things than when you look at late or final drafts. In each reading, try to confine your attention to a limited number of rhetorical issues, and respond to those. When a student turns in a final assignment, then, you will have given her a good deal of thoughtful commentary, on various aspects of the writing, and may be able to write summarily rather than laboriously in the final evaluation.

We also encourage you to use the reflective, meta-analytic letters that accompany each of the assignments as a heuristic for your own reading of the final assignments. Often students will be able to direct your attention to particular issues or accomplishments, things you might not have considered yourself.

A last word about evaluating/reading the learning journal: This piece of writing may seem the final straw to already overburdened instructors. We see the journal as an informal, exploratory, written space for students to reflect upon their learning—indeed, to formulate their knowledge—in ways that may not be evident in the more formal writing they do in the course. As such, it isn’t an “extra” assignment—it is integral to our conception of the course.

One of us who has used this journal happily and successfully suggests that reading the learning journal entries can be done with a minimal amount of tedium by reading briefly for themes and patterns. Practically, this may mean looking over the journals rather than reading them word for word, full entry by full entry. Then, when instructors comment on the journal as they evaluate, they should give very gentle suggestions about they ways students might use the journal. For instance, an instructor might find it
useful to suggest that the writer try a different kind of entry; that the writer write more briefly, but also more frequently; that the writer comment on this or that aspect of his own experience in the course; and so forth. Thus, the reading is not laborious, but is still informative to the teacher, and the commentary to the student writer is brief, suggesting directions the writer might take with the journal, rather than intimate or detailed commentary on entries. This also has the advantage of promoting the notion that the writer should be developing a sense of her own uses for the journal, rather than that the teacher has an overly involved or overly directive role in the ways the student writes in the journal.

**Assignments with Proposed Schedules, Suggested Activities, and Supporting Notes.**

**Week 1**

Introduction to Course; syllabus and grading contract.

Activities: Students should come away from this week with an initial, fairly articulate understanding of the course overview and the course practices. You should probably spend some time with the idea of a “call to write on the first day. While initially, writing courses probably all seem the same to students, they should come away from the first day with a sense that they may be asked to do different kinds of writing, and that they may have a good deal of agency in what and how they write in this course.

Many teachers find it useful to have students meet and introduce themselves in the first couple of days of class.

The second day of class should leave space for serious questioning and negotiation of the grading contract and the syllabus. Make sure that you don’t rush this phase of things—you may save yourself a lot of heartache later on if a very explicit understanding of course expectations emerges from this discussion.
You could also ask students to do some writing prior to this class concerning the various kinds of writing they do in different parts of their own worlds: in private life, at work, at school, and in the public sphere. Discussing their own experiences can lead to an enhanced notion of what kinds of writing happen in the public world; many students have a limited conception of the public sphere.

Potential Learning Journal prompts: What questions do you have about the syllabus? How does this writing course look different from or similar to other writing courses you’ve taken? What, to you, constitutes fair grading?

**Week 2**

Students read Ch. 1, “What is Writing?: Analyzing Literacy Events”; Ch. 2, “Reading Strategies: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation,”; Ch. 3, “Persuasion and Responsibility: Analyzing Arguments”

Students read the Nike Code of Conduct, either on-line or in the text. Students should, as well, spend some time looking at the two websites Trimbur cites ([www.saigon.com/~nike/](http://www.saigon.com/~nike/) and [www.sweatshopwatch.org](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org)).

Suggested Activities: These sites, which each contain multiple documents, could be the basis for a discussion of Trimbur’s notion of writing as occurring when it is exigent—that is, when there is a felt need for it—as well as to make a bridge with students’ knowledge about rhetoric, audience, purpose, and writerly choices. As well, you could use these piece to undergird a discussion of critical reading or persuasion. You may want to ask students, for instance, to analyze particular arguments within the sites; or to work closely with one or more of the reading strategies identified in chapter two. Many students also find the ability to identify aspects of argument to be an activity that rewards and enriches their reading.

There are other pieces within these three chapters, if you feel you will exhaust the your students’ interest in these pieces before you have reached
the end of the agenda. Using at least one on-line text will also be important in establishing the need for students to get comfortable reading and researching on-line texts.

Students read Ch. 4, Letters: Establishing and Maintaining Relationships

Suggested Activities: students should be particularly steered toward the parts of the chapter that focus on public letters, although understanding the more intimate uses of the letter genre is certainly a part of understanding the genre itself. Baldwin’s letter provides an instance of an intimate letter that also had a public presence. Encourage students to look at letters of appeal, such as that from Doctors without Borders, so that they can begin to extend their understanding of the kinds of letters that they themselves might write. It also makes sense to look at the letters to the editor written in response to Mark Patinkin’s piece; the letter to the editor may be one of the more familiar forms of public writing.

The first invention activities for this assignment might occur this week. The chapter suggests many ways that students could begin to think of issues within which to discover a purpose and a need for writing their letters. You might want to have specific pieces of writing assigned for peer and/or instructor review.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: Have you ever written anything where you felt an explicit “call to write”? Do you know anyone else who has? How did class go for you today? [this prompt should be made more explicit, to address whatever classroom mode(s) you used--the idea is to get them thinking about what makes learning go well and what hinders learning for them.] How are you responding to the readings/chapters in the textbook? What are some issues that interest you--that you might be willing to pursue through research and writing?
Week 3

Students read Ch. 16, “Research Projects: Using Print and Electronic Sources”; and Ch. 17, “Field Research”

Suggested Activities: Students should begin their research this week. The research can be preliminary to selecting a topic--that is, they can use their research as heuristic, as in the section of chapter 15 “Getting Started”; or their research may by now start to be focused. In any case, one assignment might be to have them describe a research path. Another assignment might be to identify a person or persons to interview, or a site to observe (relevant to their topics, or to generating topics), with notes to be brought to class. The idea is to have products-in-process that represent their initial research. Research can be a real stumbling block for students in the course, since it takes place away from the classroom and therefore can be difficult to get constructive help on from the writing teacher. Having students bring their research-in-progress can help demystify the process.

If you have internet access in your classroom or in a networked computer lab, you might find either a demonstration or an interactive activity would be helpful.

Another possibility is to arrange for a presentation at the library about on-line research. If you decide to do this, be sure to have a conversation with the librarian about what you most want from the presentation. As a prelude to the arrangements, you may want to do some surveying of your students, just to get a sense of how much they already know about on-line researching, particularly in databases. This should help you get maximum benefit from a library visit.

[Note: Your students may wonder why they are doing research preliminary to writing a letter. Research may not show up in most letters in typical academic ways--with foot or end notes, with a bibliography, with extensive citation. However, letters of the kind the course encourages are deeply knowledgeable, both about topics themselves and
the ways those topics are embedded in public sites. We think of research as the purposeful and rhetorical development of knowledge within and about the site of writing. That is, students need to develop knowledge about how the issue is constructed by various stakeholders; the typical arguments and evidences that are circulated in the public discussion about the issue; the interpretations and positions that are at issue. All of this knowledge is critical to writing effectively, no matter what the genre, and no matter the method of citation. Also, students will most likely be writing again on the same topic in the second writing assignment, so this research will have usefulness beyond this letter. Encourage them to research deeply and well now, so that this knowledge can serve as a basis for further thinking and rethinking in the second assignment.

Students read Ch. 12, “Case Study of a Writing Assignment”

This chapter can help students see the variety of strategies at hand for initiating, developing, and revising a piece of writing. In particular, the chapter gives a fairly explicit account of how a student writer used peer response to moving from one iteration to another of her writing. The schedule suggests that students undertake a piece of exploratory writing for this week. This can be very helpful as students think about their topics and the various writing situations into which they’re imagining themselves.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: What have been your best and worst experiences with researched writing? Who are some of the people or organizations that might give you valuable information or perspectives on your topic? What are you finding in your research? What are your roadblocks? What are some potential solutions to your research problems?

Week 4

In addition to reading Ch. 14, “Crafting Writing” [“The Form of Nonfiction Prose”], students will need to be reading/researching outside of class. They’ll also start to produce pieces of invention, drafts of their
letters, and revisions. You may want to schedule specific pieces of invention for this week for review by peers; a goal for this week might also include pieces of their research, with evidence of critical reading for review by peers and instructor. A goal for this week might also include a first draft of the letter.

Students read Ch. 14.

Suggested Activities: As students write—or prepare to write—a draft of the letter, this chapter can give them some ideas about how to approach the nuts-and-bolts work of putting sentences and paragraphs together. This chapter may serve as a resource throughout the remainder of the term, as students consider how to organize and revise their prose. Select the sections of the chapter that seem to make the most sense for students now.

Some possible further activities for this week:

$ Students bring two sources to class with marginal commentary; a brief response; a summary or precis of the pieces.
$ Assign specific invention work, perhaps from the text. You might give students a focused assignment, rather than asking for answers to all the prompts.
$ Review invention work in peer groups.
$ Discuss planning a piece of writing, with rhetorical issues at the fore (audience, the situation of the reader in relation to that audience, ways to invoke research without using the academic protocols such as footnotes, the means of persuasion given the goal of the letter, and so forth). Trimbur is very good on these topics.
$ Draft of the letter for peer and instructor review. Instructors may want to give the review some structure by setting goals for the workshop. There are many ways to do this: generating a set of criteria for the workshop with the students; preparing a worksheet with space for notes; asking the writer to list her priorities for the workshop, with her respondents giving her the feedback she solicits. Among the goals for the first workshop should be
developing a revision plan--or helping students understand how to
develop a plan for revision, given the feedback they receive from
the instructor and from their peers, as well as their own agendas for
revising the draft.

Note: Students should be developing some understanding that one aspect
of the writing-as-exigency model Trimbur represents is that all writers
have both **opportunities and constraints**. Student writers in particular
may find themselves in the position of having little authority and little
access to the readership they want as they write these letters. Part of their
development of topics and planning of their letters should include a highly
realistic sense of what they can say--and to whom. One thing that seems
to help is to encourage them to think about the organizations and social
worlds in which they already have membership or constituency. These
might include neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, unions, churches,
cities, and so on. Where writers have membership or constituency, there
may be a real audience for their concerns, arguments, proposals, and
claims. Thinking along these lines may help students to develop a much
more practical rhetorical sense.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: Consider using some of the invention
questions Trimbur provides in Chapter 4. Also, students should be able to
comment on their research processes, including their discoveries and
frustrations. Encourage students to use the journals to problem-solve, as
well as to discuss their research processes.

**Week 5**

This week should give students the opportunity to revise their work, to
review it again with peers and the instructor, and to consult with the
instructor in one-on-one conferences.

Suggested Activities:

$ Students come to class with a revised draft of their letters. Peers
and instructor have the chance to comment. Again, the workshop
should have specific goals. Many writing instructors find that effective peer review of student writing takes a good deal of support and instruction, even when students have had plenty of experience with peer groups. 

§ Student conferences. Class time can justifiably be spent with students one-on-one discussing their drafts. Students should be asked to come with their own questions about their drafts--that is, the conferences should be student-driven. Your own careful reading of their drafts should help the conferences be a useful experience for student writers.

[For discussion of the writing conference, see One on One, an NCTE publication.]

Potential Learning Journal prompts: What would you most like to accomplish in the next draft of your letter? How is the writing going for you? What do you need to know to do the next draft of your letter? What kind of help do you want to receive in your conference? What kinds of help can your peers give you that your instructor can’t? What kinds of help can the instructor give you that your peers can’t?

Week 6

This week should allow you to finish up the first assignment and to begin the second. Encourage students to stay with the topic they researched and wrote on for the first assignment--this will allow students to extend their research and to draw on a deepening rhetorical understanding of the situation in which they are writing as they move to the second assignment.

Suggested Activities:

§ Students have an opportunity to negotiate with the instructor what materials they will submit with the first assignment. Instructors may or may not want to see a compilation of all the students’ work--invention work, drafts, notes from peer review, and so forth.
--with the finished and revised draft of the letter. However, students should submit along with the letter a cover letter addressed to you. This piece allows the student to analyze his own work and to represent it to the instructor. You might encourage your students to direct your attention to aspects of their work that seem to them especially important. You might also ask students to show you where you might best see evidence of their learning; or you might ask, “What are you learning that I might not be able to see in the written assignments?” You might want to have students produce this cover letter for peer review and commentary. The commentary the student writer in Ch. 12 provides is a useful exemplar.

$\$ Additionally, you should have students turn in their learning journal entries. Encourage them to submit photocopies of the learning journal entries to that point, rather than the journals themselves; you are likely to have the journals past the point when students will need them again.

$\$ Students turn in their completed assignments, including at the minimum the revised letter, the cover letter (addressed to you), and the learning journal entries. After students turn in their work, you may want to do a brief in-class assessment of their experience with the assignment. Such an assessment might include asking students to write down the two or three things that seemed most successful to them in the first few weeks of the course, and the two or three things they’d suggest changing. Making this assessment anonymous might give you an honest assessment of how students are experiencing your class, and you might get an opportunity to adjust things you hadn’t considered.

$\$ You will want to give an overview of the next writing assignment. For the second writing assignment, students will be asked to choose another writing project, working with the same topic they researched and wrote on for the first assignment. Their options will be to write a fact sheet, brochure, or website (Chapter 8), a piece of commentary (Chapter 9), or a proposal (Chapter 10). Students will also write an annotated bibliography with rhetorical considerations as a part of this. To begin the second writing
assignment, then, after students have turned in their first assignments and have had the opportunity to discuss the experience of the first assignment, you may want to do some in-class writing/invention, using the students’ topics to generate ideas for new writing projects. (See the invention sections of each of the above chapters for ideas.)

Students read Chapter 8, “Fact Sheets, Brochures, and Websites: Informing and Explaining.”

Activities: In this chapter, you might focalize the Call to Write; the Ethics of Writing: Responsible Information section; any of the various examples in the chapter. Students should emerge with a sense of the kinds of opportunities these genre activities might provide, and with a sense of how such genres might work in their own topical sites.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: what were the two or three most successful aspects of the first writing assignment for you? What were the biggest challenges for you? What would you change about the course at this point? What are some new writing opportunities for you, given your topic? How might a fact sheet, brochure, or website enable you to work with some aspect of your topic? To whom might you address such a piece? Under what circumstances?

**Week 7**

This week, students will learn more about the other two options for the assignment--commentaries and proposals--and will move from considering options to trials and decisions. To this end, students will read Chapter 9, Commentary: Identifying Patterns of Meaning, and Chapter 10, Proposals: Formulating and Solving Problems.

Suggested Activities:

$ Students read Chapter 9. In this chapter, you might focalize the Call to Write; the Ethics of Writing section, “In Whose Interest?”;
the Working Together section, “Assembling a Casebook”; and some of the reading selections. Students should begin developing a sense of the kinds of opportunities the genre activity of commenting might provide, and with a sense of how commenting might work within their own topical sites. Obviously, there is a wealth of commentary occurring online and in print every day; students can find and bring to class commentaries that could be useful in discussion.

Students read Chapter 10. In this chapter, you might focalize the Call to Write; the Ethics of Writing section, “Problems and Conflicts”; the Going On-line section, “Requests for Proposals”; the Working Together section, “Advocacy Group Proposals”; and reading selections. As with discussions of the above two chapters, students should begin developing a sense of the possibilities of the genre activity of proposing, and a sense of where proposals might fit within their own topical sites and their writing work within that site.


Week 8

This week, students should begin the early stages of drafting their writing projects, including additional research, reflection on earlier research and their earlier writing projects, as well as considerations about documentation and design. Students will read Chapter 18, Research Papers: using MLA, APA, and COS Styles, and Chapter 19, Visual Design. As well, they will use invention materials in Chapters 8, 9, and 10 to begin their drafts of their reports, commentaries, or proposals.

Your work as a teacher will probably include shaping a diverse set of writing and invention strategies for a variety of writing projects. You
might want to consider how much agency you expect students to exercise in shaping their own progress toward a draft. For instance, you could ask them as part of a peer group exercise to sift through invention strategies and determine what would be best for them at this particular moment in the writing process. Alternatively, you might decide that one or two exercises, say in topic development, might be appropriate to the entire class, with further invention to be individually determined. This week might be a good week to explicitly foreground the work of invention, giving students an opportunity to reflect on an often under-articulated aspect of writing.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: What aspects of your topic did you explore in the first writing assignments? What aspects did you explore less fully? What aspect still seem interesting or compelling to you? What thoughts do you have about your audience after having written the first assignment? What ways could you address your audience that you didn’t try?

Chapters 18 and 19 may seem like more mechanical aspects of writing, yet both documentation and document design are deeply rhetorical. This may be a fruitful way to approach both topics: how much, and what kind, of documentation will the audience need, or expect, or want? What obligations does the writer have to the topic in terms of documentation? What ethos does the writer want to create, and to what extent will appropriate documentation serve that ethos? Students may also appreciate the practical advice Trimbur gives on integrating sources and working with quotations.

Likewise, design decisions by the writer affect the reader, and should be made with the reader in mind. Some students actually may be very sensitive to these issues, and their expertise and abilities might be brought into the discussion of design quite fruitfully. You may want to focus on the “From Sketch to Document: Some Examples” section of this chapter, as it highlights a way that document design might fit into the process of drafting and revising as a rhetorical practice.
Aim for an early--perhaps exploratory--draft in the latter part of the week. Peer review should focus on topical development and audience awareness, as well as on how effectively the writer exploits the potential of the genre.

This week may also be a good time for students to begin to assemble their annotated bibliographies. Obviously, the materials in Chapter 18 will be relevant, although Trimbur does not explicitly treat the annotated bibliography as a genre. Other texts explain this genre in a fairly straightforward manner, such as *Conversations in Context: Identity, Knowledge, and College Writing* (Fitzgerald, Bruce et al, Harcourt Brace: Ft. Worth, TX, 1998). You can bring in such material to support this part of the assignment. Your discussions about the rhetorical nature of research should assume a fairly pointed presence here, as students offer accounts not only of the content of their sources, but also the rhetorical place of the sources, in their view; the ways that texts might be speaking to one another; and the potential usefulness of these sources within the writing opportunities that students are constructing for themselves. You may want to have students bring drafts of the annotated bibliographies for peer review, or for your review.

**Week 9**

This week should focus on bringing drafts to fruition, along with specific attention to elements of documentation and design. This may also be a good week to confer with students, since they may need and want a close reading of their work, with specific rhetorical advice.

By now, students should be thinking in a much more engaged way with the rhetorical world of their topics and texts. Their writing decisions should be made with the following considerations uppermost: What do I want to happen as a result of this text? Will this text help that outcome to happen? What will be the effect of this text on my audience? Who am I in the world of my topic and in the world of my audience? What are the constraints on my writing as a result of my situation within my topic and my address to my audience? How can I best work within those constraints?
Similarly, the instructor’s work will always be to attend to these concerns as a rhetorical counselor. Where it is possible, a student may want to try finding a reader that is part of the real-world audience to whom she is writing. Where this isn’t possible, both writer and instructor will need to engage imaginatively with that audience as a means of critiquing and improving the student’s text for the intended audience.

Students should be encouraged to plan their own goals for their conferences. Ask students to spend some time prior to the conference deciding what they would most like to discuss. Encourage them to ask specific questions about their drafts, including those for the annotated bibliographies.

Potential Learning Journal prompts: What is the status of your draft? What do you still need to know in order to proceed with the draft? What are some ways you can use the source material you’ve found in your research? What would you like to discuss in your conference with the instructor?

Week 10

This week, students will finish revising the second assignment and will draft and review a cover letter, similar to the one they wrote for the first assignment. (See notes for Week Six for suggested activities.)

As students undertake another meta-analytic cover letter, you may want to tailor the assignment to the writing they’ve undertaken over the past few weeks. Inviting students to reflect specifically on the act of revisiting a topic with a new writing project may enable new insights about writing in public settings, where often writers will work for years with a topic. How do writers writing in contexts that matter to them exercise their rhetorical agency? How do they learn from their earlier attempts? Such considerations may be appropriate here for your students.
Depending upon how your students are doing, you may want to have the completed assignment due at the end of this week, or the beginning of the next.

Week 11

This week, students will undertake the final new writing assignment of the course. Collaborative assignments can be an appropriate challenge at this point in a writing course: students will have had a range of writing experiences more or less on their own in this course (as well as in their previous writing courses), and the energy of working with others, the challenge of creating a more ambitious project of greater scope, can be exhilarating. In all honesty, it can also be taxing. We have described the third assignment as collaborative, with students self-selecting into groups of two to four for work on a topic of their choice. However, you should decide whether a collaborative environment is best for your students at this point in the course.

This week (week eleven) will be taken up with the process of topic selection and the beginnings of topic development, as well as some discussion of collaborative work.

Selecting Topics: We strongly encourage self-selection among the students for both topics and collaborative partnerships. A method that has worked is the following: students are asked in their learning journals to note any topics that are of current interest to them, including prior topics, if those topics still seem viable and interesting. They are then asked to come to class ready to offer these topics, along with an indication to the class of their relative investment in the topic(s). Students are then encouraged to engage in free discussion, including moving about the classroom, so that they can gravitate to the topic and the people they’re interested in working with. Limiting the groups to four seems reasonable.

You will likely have students who have had negative experiences with collaborative work in the past. It’s important to set an overall tone for this collaborative work, including the groups setting ground rules, a means of
out-of-class contact, a schedule, goals, and accountabilities. Some whole-
class discussion of the nature of successful collaborative work, in all its
variations, should help students construct fruitful partnerships, along with
some assurance that you as the instructor will have some supervisory role.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: what topics interest you for the third
collaborative assignment? What have been your prior experiences with
group work? What makes collaborative work valuable, if anything? What
rules would you like to govern your group? What role can the instructor
most helpfully play in assuring the success of collaborative work? What
kinds of writing do you think would be most successful in your public
writing campaign?

Week 12

This week should include some unstructured time for groups to meet and
plan, as well as a brief consultation between groups and the instructor for
formative feedback on group projects.

Collaborative projects generally require a significant portion of the class
hours to be devoted to group meetings. Instructors may feel more or less
comfortable with the scenario of students working more or less on their
own. You may want to set an overall class calendar for this project. For
instance, you may want students to be prepared to submit a description of
their projects, a schedule with completion dates and so forth. You may
want to schedule days when significant pieces of work should be
completed for peer review. Bear in mind that the calendar will likely need
to be fluid. Having a general calendar may be helpful even if it needs
constant revision, partly because it may keep students mindful of the parts
of the assignment and the need to stay focused.
As you consult with student groups, ask them what role they’d like you to
play, and if at all possible, agree on a schedule in which you’ll be seeing
various pieces of their work in progress.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: What do you already know about the
topic you’re working on? What sources are you finding, and how helpful
are they? What do you need to know more about? Who might find your research and ideas valuable to know? How could you most reasonably reach those people? What successes and frustrations have your group encountered? How well are things going? What help do you need?

**Week 13**

This week may look much like the last, but students should be further along, starting to generate early drafts of the various pieces of the assignment. You may want to ask students to bring drafts of the pieces for peer and instructor review. It may be helpful to you and to students to decide with them what your role will be, and what schedule they’d propose for your involvement in their project. In any case, students should by this week begin to have material for group review and for your review. You will need to be flexible, to be able to give suggestions for research, rhetorical advice, and invention.

You may want to hold group consultations in the Writing Center, if one is available to you, or in a computer lab with web access. This could facilitate your assisting students with research, or with helping them to review and assess the kinds of sources they are finding. You might also encourage students to set up tutorials with Writing Center Peer Tutors, who are able to work with groups as well as individuals.

As students begin to develop their overall strategies for a public writing campaign, you may find them thinking in relatively limited ways about the genre possibilities for public writing. It might be helpful to direct them to specific genre chapters in Trimbur, or to invention materials there.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: commentary on the process of group work; commentary on topic development, research, drafting, etc.; commentary on rhetorical aspects of the project.

**Week 14**

Students should, by now, be making serious progress on their projects. You may want to have a whole-class discussion to check in: what
questions overall does the class have on the project? Where are the individual groups relative to one another? What would be most helpful to the class?

You may want to request that each group draft a brief memo addressing the status of their work. This memo could come in early in the week; the information from these memos may help you to plan the next week effectively. This may mean, in fact, that you will be able to directly assist the individual groups where they most need it--with direction on research, with a reading of drafts, with encouragement, with specific goals, and so forth. It also may mean another whole-class meeting at the beginning of the next week about some topic that seems to be necessary to the class.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: same as those for week thirteen.

**Week 15**

This week, students should be revising and finishing pieces of work, and pulling together the whole project.

Student groups should have maximum latitude in determining their schedules. But you should also take the pulse of the groups, and decide where your help can be most beneficial.

You may want to have whole-class discussions to set standards for the two required pieces, the annotated bibliography and the researched essay. You may want to have groups engage in informal sharing of their drafts of these two pieces. (This could also fruitfully occur earlier, or in another format, such as a whole-class meeting with presentations of in-progress work.) The general idea of this week, however, should be to give students the time together they need, while balancing the needs of the whole class for a sense of the project as groups are working toward completion.

You may want to have the groups draft a cover letter of their work for the portfolio, much like the letters they have written individually for the previous two assignments. Such a letter could have the benefit of bringing
Week 16

This week, students will turn in the third assignment. As a final assignment in the course, students will individually select and revise a portfolio of their best work in the course.

The work students have been doing all along this semester should be the field of texts from which they select their work. You should assign students to read Chapter 21, Writing Portfolios, as a springboard for discussing the idea of a portfolio, and for invention opportunities as students consider their potential selections. Encourage students to include a variety of kinds of work, including finished and revised pieces; exploratory pieces; journal entries; collaborative pieces; and so on. All their work should be covered by a reflective letter, such as the one described in Chapter 21.

You may want to divide the class-time between whole-class discussion of writing portfolios; small-group work on invention—perhaps even some pairings of students who could give a serious look at a partner’s portfolio options; and consultation with individual students.

This portfolio should serve as a culminating gesture in the class, allowing students to reconsider their work in the class, return to it with more knowledge and a different perspective, revise it with an eye toward presenting their work with a specific rhetorical goal, and reflect upon their learning in the class.

Potential Learning Journal Prompts: List all the writing you’ve done in this class. Consider not only the formal pieces but the informal, the exploratory, the tentative, the “writing-to-learn.” What would give a
representative picture of your writing in the course? What would give a “my best work” view of your writing? What impression would you like to create with this portfolio? How might you arrange the pieces? What will help the reader understand your aim and be persuaded of your view of your own writing?

Be sure your students understand the due dates of the final portfolio. Many teachers find a flexible due date is workable, given the extended nature of finals. Be kind to yourself as you think about this issue—no one wants to be grading too late after class is finished!

Meeting with your class during the scheduled finals period can help draw the class to a close, even if there is no final examination. There are a wealth of possible closure activities, including presentation of collaborative work; a discussion of the course and its future; reflection activities, which encourage students to think about their accomplishments and future goals for writing; and so on. Give some thought to what would best help your students finish the course with a sense of their own accomplishments.