INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

to accompany

COMPOSING A CIVIC LIFE
A Rhetoric and Readings for Inquiry and Action

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_Instructor's Manual_ to accompany Berndt/Muse, _Composing A Civic Life_

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PART I. Teaching *Composing a Civic Life*

Why we wrote *Composing a Civic Life*
The terrors of hell, said Ebenezer Scrooge, originate in an undigested bit of beef or an uncooked potato.

So it is with textbooks.

At least this is how we felt on those nights when we wrote until 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning, the Inedible Twelve from a local Denny’s transmogrified into explications of critical reading and the writing process.

Those occasional grim patches reminded us that writing is hard work, and teaching writing well is harder. Such truths guided the approach we took to this instructor's manual. We tried to anticipate some of the theoretical and practical problems you might face in teaching *Composing a Civic Life* (*CCL*) by suggesting ways to set up assignments, sequence the chapters, and link readings. We also included sample syllabi, writing assignments, and resources for further inquiry and action. The latter material we included because we know that teachers go into new books and new classes as researchers, learning from the experience but always looking for ways to go beyond it. Finally, we wanted to use this manual to introduce ourselves and have with you the kind of frank conversation that we hope will make teaching *CCL* more successful.

We first got the idea for *CCL* while teaching at the University of Minnesota. At the time, the U of M was trying to meet its land-grant mission by offering courses that focused on civic engagement. One of those offerings was a freshman composition course on citizenship and public ethics. We served on a committee that designed curriculum and mentored new instructors. Unfortunately, there weren’t yet any textbooks on the market that addressed issues of writing and citizenship directly. With the simple brashness characteristic of first-time textbook writers, we decided to develop our own.
Publishers took an immediate interest in the project because they perceived a renewed public enthusiasm for the civic life. Scholars and writers like Robert Putnam, Jedediah Purdy, and Paul Rogat Loeb were calling citizens to strengthen community ties. Politicians and community leaders like Al Gore, Sam Nunn, Ervin Duggan, and Colin Powell were calling citizens to renew America’s social contract by volunteering or participating in community affairs. Events of the last few years reinforced their messages. The series of school shootings, including those at Columbine High School in 1999, raised concerns about education, the health of our communities, and the accessibility of guns. The contested results of the 2000 presidential election raised questions about the Electoral College and voter disenfranchisement. The attacks of September 11, 2001 intensified public and private reviews of what it means to be a U.S. citizen in a diverse, often contentious world. Writing encourages reflection and gives shape and heft to our ideas and feelings, so we felt a writing textbook was an appropriate way to meet the call of leaders and of historical events.

In our teaching and in our civic lives, we are both Jeffersonian liberals. We believe in the ideals of a dynamic democracy and an informed, questioning citizenry. We would like to see the writing classroom serve as a model of rigorous, ethical inquiry and action, and as a place for cultivating a healthy civic life—a space for socially engaged and historically and politically informed writing. Michael Berndt is an Americanist who wants course material that is historically grounded; he also wants materials that will challenge students ethically, pushing them to wrestle with the complex details of genuine social issues. Amy Muse researches drama and social justice; she wants course material that supports service learning, encourages student activism, and helps students learn to reflect upon their work. These political and pedagogical ideals inform the entire book.

When we imagined the best textbook for our needs, we knew we didn’t want one that prompted students to discuss citizenship abstractly; we needed a textbook that:
- **Empowers students to become critical citizens.** Students should cultivate habits of questioning and analysis that make them better community members, constituents, and consumers. Instead of punching their belligerent neighbor, they might use strategies for understanding why he or she is being so disagreeable. Instead of credulously lapping up a politician’s rhetoric, they might demand clear policies and evidence-based decisions from their leaders.

- **Gets students involved in social issues outside the classroom.** Students should learn strategies for bringing their own values and beliefs into active dialog with others’. They should also learn how to effectively contact community leaders and participate more actively in policy making.

- **Gives us ideas for setting up active learning experiences.** Students learn best by doing things for themselves, so the textbook should provide ideas and inspiration for setting up experiments, rather than handing over comprehensive lectures about the subject. (We dislike textbooks that show off the knowledge of the authors more than they allow for discoveries to be made by the readers.)

- **Provides historical context and perspective.** Students would probably appreciate knowing that Thomas Jefferson hated the peer reviews of the Declaration of Independence, that what constitutes a “good” argument changes over time and across cultures, and that faith communities have a history of influencing American political policy.

- **Offers contemporary perspectives on pressing issues.** Violence in high school hallways, our individual contributions to the deterioration of the planet—these are ongoing problems with many different dimensions. They’re also problems that students can participate in ameliorating; they are situations in which one person or a small group of people can make a difference.
We designed *CCL*, then, to set up the instructor, students, and text as more equal partners in the creation of classroom knowledge. In setting up this interactive approach, we assumed that students should be made aware of our pedagogical assumptions, and that they should participate in some classroom decisions. This necessarily makes us, the teachers, more vulnerable at times. We need to know not only what we want to teach them but why, how it will help their development as writers, scholars, and citizens. And when we don’t know the answer, we need the wisdom to step aside and let students make the discoveries, to let them teach us as well as themselves. You might choose to discuss the learning-by-doing philosophy with your students so they understand the opportunities and responsibilities it creates for them.

Here is a more specific example of how we, the authors, learned to step aside. In Chapter One, students are asked to discuss the language of the U.S. Constitution. Last semester, one student wondered aloud why they were asked to read a text that seemingly contradicts the tenets of good prose. It does, after all, contain a lot of nominalizations, convoluted syntax, and capitalized general nouns. A competent answer would have required knowledge of the stylistic conventions of eighteenth-century legal prose and the material conditions of text production in early America. All one of us could say at the time was that the text’s writing style reminds us that writing conventions change over time--not a very erudite response. The student’s question invited the class to explore related issues, including the current push in legal writing to use more accessible prose. The instructor helped frame their inquiry, introduced them to promising databases, and then let them go to it.

Students in our first-year composition courses sometimes ask, “Why do we have to study all of this citizenship stuff?” (We’ve received this question even when students were enrolled in a course specifically designated as citizenship and public ethics.) Of course, the students’ question is perfectly legitimate. It challenges us to open our pedagogical thinking to them, to show our sincerity and competence. Here are the reasons we offer for a civics-based composition course; we welcome you
to discuss these reasons and add additional ones to the book’s Companion Website:

- The study of civics is inherently valuable, especially for students who have never studied their own political communities. As Thomas Jefferson famously said, “Whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government.” (Also commonly attributed to Jefferson, but not confirmed, is the wise aphorism “an informed citizenry is the bulwark of a democracy.”)
- Beginning with citizenship gives students a common subject of study that draws them together in collaborative research.
- Studying civics grounds later inquiries by giving students a rudimentary sense of how issues are introduced, debated, and acted upon in their communities.
- The intellectual content offers students a challenging subject on which to focus their research and writing. The first chapter illustrates the kind of sustained inquiry that students need to follow to succeed in college-level research.
- Citizenship and the cultural myths that promote nationalism offer a rich subject on which to exercise critical thinking.
- International students often find more meaningful contexts for exchange. (We’ve noticed that international students are often much sharper in their political understanding than native-born American students. They come here knowing quite a bit about American government and politics—and they are eager to discuss the merits and problems of our system relative to those of other countries.)

We know that many of you may not be teaching a composition course focused so intensively on citizenship, and thus we designed the book to work more broadly as well: as a study of community, of current events, of human communication and ethical relations. Our overall philosophy of teaching writing is as a means toward living a more contemplative, engaged life. The rhetorical instruction and readings can be shaped in any number of ways to meet the needs of your own teaching style, classroom structure, and interests.
How we organized *Composing a Civic Life*

To encourage interaction between the text, the instructor, and students, we tried to dramatize the processes of discovery and learning. To better teach these processes we gave them greater formality; this is why the chapters are organized around a sequence of progressive inquiries. Our idea is that students will learn to continually push their knowledge and internalize a variety of different strategies for gathering that knowledge. Thus, *CCL* tends to reveal only so much at a time, encouraging students to first read an essay or do an activity and then reflect upon it. For example, Chapter Four begins with a call to debate ways students might improve their communities. The debate is followed up with a discussion of different approaches to arguing. If students practice the debate before reading the rest of the material, they will have experiences to draw from, creating an opportunity to exercise critical reading. Hopefully, they will not only have discovered the same insights we present in the book, but they will have ideas by which to challenge the book. If they read all the materials ahead of time, however, they may simply follow the patterns of arguing that we discuss. Their learning will be more passive, but still learning. So, to teach *CCL* well, you simply need to time the readings around the kind of learning you want students to do.

The first five chapters, the rhetoric chapters, approach critical thinking, reading, and writing as civic skills that we need to develop to succeed in academic work and to lead a satisfying, examined life. Chapters Six-Twelve are organized around communities, each with a collection of readings and a case study that raises ethical dilemmas for that particular community. We tried to make *CCL* flexible so you can teach Chapters One-Five first or integrate them with Chapters Six-Twelve. You can mix things up because the chapters build on each other. The community chapters give good models and sensitize students to the material context of writing while the rhetoric chapters get them thinking as writers and writing as critical thinkers. In Part Two of this manual, we provide some practical suggestions for integrating the different chapters.
How to use the unique features of *Composing a Civic Life*

We include several features in the book that are intended to jump start inquiries, enrich classroom discussions, or encourage students to see the issues they are investigating in new ways.

Chapter One: a first-week unit on inquiry and action

The first week of a composition course always poses a dilemma: how do you jumpstart the class to create interest and to introduce the central ideas of the course? Students pick up immediately on how your class will run, but it is very difficult to build that quick interest that will carry them forward as active participants, especially if we begin with abstract instruction on critical reading or the writing process.

So, we wrote Chapter One as a first-week unit that would model critical thinking, reading and writing even as it focused students on a challenging subject. Through a series of short inquiries, students learn to draw Mind-Maps, analyze dictionaries, interpret legal documents and advertisements, and read and write personal narratives. These activities will deepen their understanding of citizenship and prepare them for the entire semester’s learning by practicing the skills of the book before they’re officially taught them.

The unit is flexible, but it’s also sufficient. Unless you integrate your own materials, you won’t have to prepare much that first week or two. (You will have more time to get the lessons planned that you had promised you wouldn’t put off, but did.) The exercises in Chapter One should be done in class, the discoveries made together. You need to allow time for this, so the unit may take more than a week. Chapter One also offers many opportunities for diagnostic writing. Students might write about what they learned from making the Mind Map, or from reading the U.S. Constitution, and so on. You might even have the first formal paper be a personal narrative or a definition of the civic life; this is why we included a section on how to write narratives. We also included sample assignment descriptions in Part Two of this instructor’s manual. Students read about the value of narratives as a form of knowledge, they read and respond to
several narratives, and then they add their own voice to the conversation circling around what it means to be a citizen.

Getting Started activities: learning by doing

At the beginning of every chapter is a Getting Started activity. These follow the pedagogical principle of having students try the work of the chapter before they’re officially taught that work, engaging students in the chapter’s subject matter by first involving them, on an everyday level, both in the issues and in the skills to be taught in the chapter. For example, the twelve Getting Started activities in the book get students involved in:

- **Picturing Citizenship: Creating Images of Citizenship**
  This visualizing exercise begins with our associations and assumptions about citizenship. We suggest it as an individual exercise but students could work collaboratively, bringing in one image, article, headline, etc. and then working on one large Mind Map.

- **Critical Thinking as Examining Life**
  Using several real-life scenarios, we ask students to define and begin to resolve the dilemmas in them, noting how critical thinking is both intellectual and ethical.

- **Inquiring in Our Communities: Asking Socrates’s critical question “how should one live?”**
  In this homework assignment students seek answer(s) from a variety of sources and go outside the typical “research paper” sources.

- **Arguing in Our Communities: How Should One Live?**
  The activity from Chapter Three is continued, with students taking the answers they received and examining them as arguments.

- **Critical Literacy and Civic Participation**
  Using the September 11th attack as the example, this brainstorming activity asks students to imagine the many different angles, approaches, perspectives that can be taken on any one event; and the different research and social action projects that could be developed—in and out of the classroom—to explore and answer their questions and concerns.
• **What Does Community Look Like? Does it matter to citizenship?**
  Students use ethnographic activities to observe the features of their local community and to visit and describe a neighborhood meeting-place.

• **How Do We See the Family?**
  Students are asked to describe their own families, to define what makes their grouping a “family,” to read others’ responses, and then to reflect upon their own response.

• **Exploring Your Campus**
  Students are asked to conduct research into the social, professional, and academic opportunities of their universities through telephone interviews, personal observation, and library research.

• **Defining Global Citizenship**
  Using the “global medium,” the Internet, students compare the definitions of global citizenship they find on several Websites.

• **Adopting a Nonhuman Perspective**
  Role-playing and empathic activities encourage students to put themselves in the place of animals or plants and practice seeing the world from a different perspective.

• **Observing Worship Practices in Faith Communities**
  Students are encouraged to visit at least three faith communities’ worship services as participant observers and to reflect on the sense of community communicated in each.

• **Imagining the Future**
  Students analyze a still from Fritz Lang’s film *Metropolis* and imagine the role of technology in our future societies.

(We’ve categorized the activities as individual or group, in-class or take-home, but of course you should feel free to revise those instructions, and any other aspects of the activities, to fit the needs of your course.)

Our plan was that students would not only become interested in the subject matter of the chapter at hand, but would be exposed to questions and intellectual problems that arise when using the particular skill (in Chapters
One-Five) or when living as a member of the particular community (in Chapters Six-Twelve). They would then, ideally, enter the work of the chapter with more honest curiosity and concern than is generally the case.

For instance, when we have the students inquire “How should one live?” they frequently come up with ideas that continue teasing their intellects throughout the chapter. One student was told by his older brother to “Live in the moment,” which he interpreted to mean he should drop out of college, make just enough money to live on, and spend the rest of his time traveling and doing whatever he wanted. His answer to the question sparked a class discussion of the value of taking composition and, more generally, of getting a college education. The student did not drop out of school, but he did become more self-conscious about what he was doing in college. He asked to modify the research paper assignment so he could do an ethnographic study of Grateful Dead fans.

Stop and Think boxes: deepening the conversation
Two kinds of dialog boxes—called Stop and Think and Writing Style boxes—are placed throughout the chapters to encourage students to think critically and read as writers. Stop and Think boxes prompt students to connect what they are reading to other issues and to their own experiences. They bring more intellectual content into the course and suggest the relevance of larger discussions taking place outside the classroom. The boxes might be used to set up journal assignments, class discussion, and, in some cases, research projects. We have Stop and Think boxes on the following subjects:

- **Larry King on interviewing people**
  He encourages interviewers not to be afraid to ask the questions that most intrigue them.

- **Robert Putnam on the value of surveys in research**
  He emphasizes how much surveys can reveal about people’s real attitudes if we learn how to craft questions very carefully.

- **The ethics of doing field research with human subjects**
  Students learn about Institutional Review Boards and, further, being conscious of their ethical obligations to others.
- Deborah Tannen on the argument culture
  She makes us aware of the adversarial nature of Western culture’s approach toward argument, and how we need to supplement it with nonconfrontational alternatives.

- Michael Shermer and the value of skepticism
  He offers reasons people believe “weird things” (alien abduction, psychic predictions, etc.) and suggestions for questioning rather than ridiculing others’ claims.

- Public Art
  The Millennium Mosaic Project of Covington Community Center is used as an example for thinking about the purpose and value of public, as opposed to private, art.

- AOL’s online pact to stop violence after the Columbine shootings
  The actual pact as it appeared online is reproduced and students are asked to consider the value of it as a work of social action.

- The TV Family
  Students are asked to observe and analyze the representations of families on TV shows and assess their influence on real-life families.

- The Olympic Games
  Students consider the paradoxes of the modern Olympics, which are exercises in both international community-building and nationalistic rivalry.

- The notion of a worldview
  Students are urged to examine how they see the world, and to consider how their worldview determines the way they interact with the world and its species.

- The phenomenon of house churches: designing your own worship service
  This asks students to contemplate what it means to worship, and the implications of the desire to create and participate in our own rituals of meaning.

- Solving world hunger online: The Hunger Site
  Students examine the possible consequences of online charities and how the Internet changes ideas of what might constitute social action.
Writing Style boxes: thinking as writers
Writing Style boxes offer additional writing tips, and they discuss the conventions of academic and public writing. These style boxes connect the writing instruction of the beginning chapters with the readings, asking students to think about the readings as crafted texts. We should emphasize, though, that the boxes are not fully sufficient for writing these works. They should be taught in conjunction with students’ critical analysis of models, especially to point out what persuasive strategies a writer might use. This is why we placed the Writing Style boxes by the actual examples. You might use the advice in the box to critique as well, e.g. discussing why the authors of particular letters or editorials did or did not follow conventions. Throughout the book you can find the following Writing Style boxes:

- Crafting a Persona (Benjamin Franklin)
- Writing as a Performance Art (Ralph Ellison)
- Writing a Proposal (Carol Bly)
- Using Sarcasm (Tim Wise)
- Writing Editorials and Opinion Pieces
- Writing a News Article (George Dohrmann)
- Writing Letters to the Editor
- Creating a Pamphlet (*A Citizen’s Guide to the WTO*)
- The Problem/Solution Essay (David Orr)
- Writing a Public Letter (Martin Luther King, Jr.)
- Showing, Not Telling (Tony Earley)

Questions for Inquiry and Action: continuing the inquiries
Each individual reading, and each case study, ends with Questions for Inquiry and Action. Each set of questions asks students to perform close readings and to compare the reading with others from within that particular chapter and sometimes with readings from other chapters. Each set of Questions for Inquiry and Action, as the title implies, also provides suggestions for further inquiry—paper suggestions, research projects--and for practical social action. These questions can be used for class discussion, informal writing, and formal papers. Often one will lead to
another. For example, one student who read and discussed Thomas Friedman’s “Senseless in Seattle” in class wrote a two-page response to it that sparked her desire to know more about how globalization affects people on a local level. She developed a research project that had her interviewing recent immigrants from Eritrea and Vietnam, a graduate student from Tanzania, and the director of a local center that works with Latin American hunger-relief organizations.

**How to use the Companion Website**

Our Companion Website provides the usual information, including an overview of the book’s content and philosophy, FAQ and Ask the Authors sections. We also provide links to a number of resources and readings that we couldn’t include in the book for reasons of space and/or cost.

We hope the Companion Website will serve as an extension of the book, a space for students and instructors to communicate with one another and share resources—a salon, if you will. At several places in the book, particularly in the case study for Chapter Ten, we ask students to post their research results, social action experiences, useful information sources, and other ideas on the site. Eventually we hope the site will allow students to publish their work and communicate with a much wider audience.

We encourage you to have your students visit the Website and to post their questions and comments there. (And, naturally, we’d like to get comments and critiques from you as well.) For instance, responses to Chapter One—what transpired in your class discussions, your questions, challenges, and definitions of citizenship—could spark discussion among students and instructors across the country. You could make suggestions for narratives to add to the collection, or post students’ own narratives on the site.

As well, we’d like to know which additional communities and ethical dilemmas you’d like to examine in the future. What are the ethical dilemmas being faced in your communities? How are the dilemmas framed, what sides are taken? What is at stake in the disagreements?
PART II. Teaching Chapters 1-5: Thinking, Reading, and Writing as Civic Skills

Why we organized around civic skills
The shelves in our offices are lined with composition textbooks. Some focus on writing for the “real” world, others on writing across academic disciplines, and others still on writing as self-exploration. We don’t see CCL as any more real or foundational than other approaches. Rather, we see the book appealing to those instructors who want their students to be savvier, more informed, more thoughtful, and more active citizens.

To reach this goal we have tried to treat inquiry and action as complementary, mutually strengthening components of an active civic life. Some textbooks treat social issues as subjects for contemplation and discussion, without much thought to how students can respond to these issues outside the classroom. Other textbooks emphasize action, teaching students how to write in public genres, without much stress put on critical thinking, reading, or research. We believe social action must be guided by careful thinking and meticulous research—indeed inquiry itself is a form of social action. We also believe that social action, like writing letters to the editor, volunteering, or protesting, can often teach us more effectively than classroom discussion. Inquiry and action reinforce one another, making us more informed, perhaps even wiser, community members.

So, just what are civic skills? They are habits of mind and strategies of research and communication we can use to better secure our civil rights and to act with greater circumspection in performing our civic duties. In terms of the composition course, here is what we mean:

- **Critical thinking.** As citizens, consumers, and members of many communities, we need strategies for making informed, careful choices on what we should believe, who we should vote for, what we should buy, who we should associate with, and how we should live.
- **Critical reading.** We get exposed to so much more information. We need standards and strategies for assessing this information, helping us decide how readily we should believe others’ claims.
- Research. One of the best first steps we can take when confronted with information on which we must act is to conduct research. We need to know where to find additional information and how to evaluate whether the information we gather sufficiently supports the knowledge and wisdom we draw from it.
- Arguing. In a culture that views debate as a win-or-lose contest, we need to learn wiser strategies of arguing, strategies that push all participants to reexamine their beliefs, to promote inquiry on a given subject, and to preserve community ties.
- Writing. As a tool of thinking and communication, writing can help us think and read critically. It can also help us share our views with others and improve the quality of life in our communities.

This approach to composition will make us stronger citizens. As we developed CCL, we recorded real-life situations in which the habits of mind and the research and writing skills that we were teaching our students took shape as civic skills. Here are just a few of many examples. We encourage you to perform the same exercise and to create formal or informal writing assignments from these scenarios.

- A student reading a letter to the editor on school funding observed, in the writer’s sarcastic tone and use of conspiracy metaphors, that the writer rejected more school funding because he believed that teachers were taking advantage of him, living easy on the property taxes he paid. The student got more from her analysis of the letter because she had learned to think about tone, word choice, and so on.
- In the class following a speech by President George W. Bush, several students came in complaining. Their complaint was that Bush was recommending national policies but showing the American people no evidence that these policies would work. One student said politicians should try to be more like teachers, helping citizens see for themselves the wisdom of the politicians’ ideas.
- Several students who participated in a service-learning project continued volunteering at a local community center, helping Latino and Hmong residents prepare for their United States citizenship
exams. The project had helped them connect with new members of their local community.

- A student wrote a letter to the editor of her campus newspaper, asking fellow students to respect the civil rights of protestors representing the Animal Liberation Front. She received a condescending e-mail from a university professor criticizing her argument. At first she was mortified, but after examining this professor’s arguing strategies in class, we realized that he had acted unethically, using his position of authority to intimidate the student into silence.

- A student was arrested for crossing a barrier at the School of the Americas. She had gone to Fort Benning, Georgia with a church group to protest the school’s practices. Writing about that event for her composition class helped her “frame” it, seeing in what she did the realization of values and beliefs that she hadn’t articulated for herself before.

As the last two examples illustrate, students who get involved open themselves up to controversy. Instructors should talk about this fact with their classes before encouraging them to volunteer, write public genres, join a political organization, or participate in social protests.

**How to approach *Composing a Civic Life***

The book is laid out with an immersion-experience introductory chapter followed by four chapters focused on rhetorical instruction, and then seven chapters of readings, each with its own case study. Although the book is most obviously set up to explore citizenship through six different communities, you can approach the book in other ways, depending upon your own pedagogical preferences. In addition to a community-based approach, we suggest some ideas below for three popular organizational schemes: theme, genre, and scenario-based or problem-based learning.

Whatever approach you take, you will want to make clear to your students the connections between various course themes, and the connections between the readings and your learning objectives. The themes need to be tied in to your learning objectives in a way that seems natural. It’s also a
good idea to bring into the course whatever is happening in the world at the time—locally, nationally, internationally—and to tie it, too, into your learning objectives.

Community approach: focusing on context. This approach follows the physical organization of the book, beginning with a general discussion of “community” and then moving from familiar communities to larger, more abstract ones. This approach allows instructors to emphasize the real and imagined structures and practices that hold a group of people together, including those related to writing. This approach also emphasizes the situated nature of writing; we craft documents in response to audience and the social and historical context. Here are the readings as they are presently organized:

Chapter Six: Negotiating Community: Living a Civic Life
Robert Frost, “Mending Wall”
Carol Bly, “Enemy Evenings”
Henry David Thoreau, excerpt from “Civil Disobedience”
Ursula Le Guin, “The Ones who Walk Away From Omelas”

Case Study: The Columbine Shootings Make Us Question Community
Mark Obmascik, “Massacre at Columbine High”
Editorials from the San Francisco Chronicle and Orlando Sentinel
Lee Judge, “How Could This Happen?” editorial cartoon
Jeff Stark, “We Called It ‘Littlefun’”
Darrell Scott, “Our Greatest Need”
Tim Wise, “School Shootings and White Denial”

Chapter Seven: The Family as Community
Mary Pipher, “Beliefs About Families”
William J. Bennett, “Leave Marriage Alone”
Mark Seliger’s *Rolling Stone* photograph “Melissa’s Secret: The Name of the Father and the Making of a New American Family”
Margaret Talbot, “A Mighty Fortress”
James McBride, “Black Power”
Fatima Mernissi, “Moonlit Nights of Laughter”

Case Study: How Do We Define “Family Values”?  
   Dan Quayle, “Restoring Basic Values”  
   Editorials from the *Seattle Times* and *The Christian Science Monitor*  
   Ellen Willis, “Why I’m Not ‘Pro-Family’”  

Chapter Eight: The Higher Education Community  
   Thomas Jefferson, “Plan for Public Education in Virginia”  
   Arthur Levine and Jeanette S. Cureton, “Collegiate Life: An Obituary”  
   bell hooks, “Engaged Pedagogy”  
   Peter Sacks, “The Sandbox Experiment”  
   Roger H. Garrison, “Why Am I in College?”

Case Study: College Athletics vs. Academics: The University of Minnesota’s Men’s Basketball Scandal  
   George Dohrmann, “U Basketball Program Accused of Academic Fraud”  
   Letters to the Editor in response to Dohrmann  
   Excerpt from *Report of the Special Senate Committee on Student Academic Integrity* at the University of Minnesota  
   Murray Sperber, “Cheating”  
   Advertisement from Rutgers University’s alumni magazine  
   Henry Louis Gates, Jr., “Delusions of Grandeur”

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Chapter Nine: Citizens of the World: The Global Community
Ngugi wa Thiong’o, “Decolonising the Mind”
James L. Watson, “China’s Big Mac Attack”
Benjamin R. Barber, “Jihad vs. McWorld”
Slavenka Drakulic, “On Bad Teeth”

Case Study: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: The World Trade Organization Protests in Seattle, 1999
From A Citizen’s Guide to the World Trade Organization
Mike Carter, “Mayor declares civil emergency, imposes curfew in downtown Seattle”
Roz Chast, “One Morning, While Getting Dressed,” New Yorker cartoon
Thomas L. Friedman, “Senseless in Seattle”
Tom Tomorrow, “This Modern World” cartoon
Elizabeth (Betita) Martinez, “Where Was the Color in Seattle?”

Chapter Ten: Citizens of the Earth: The Planetary Community
David W. Orr, “Saving Future Generations from Global Warming”
John Haines, “Snow”
Regina Austin and Michael Schill, “Activists of Color”
Daniel Quinn, from Ishmael
Muriel Rukeyser, “St. Roach”
John Clare, “The Badger”

Case Study: Measuring Our Impact on the Earth

Chapter Eleven: Communities of Faith
Stephen Carter, “The Culture of Disbelief”
Anne Lamott, “Why I Make Sam Go To Church”
Tom Beaudoin, “Experience is Key”
Katherine Rosman, “Mormon Family Values: Facing the Anguish of Their Gay Son, the Hardys Became Accidental Activists”
Wendy Kaminer, “The Last Taboo: Why America needs Atheism”
Case Study: The Role of Faith Communities in the Civil Rights Movement
Robert M. Franklin, “Another Day's Journey: Faith Communities Renewing American Democracy”
Martin Luther King, Jr., speech at Holt Street Baptist Church, Dec. 5, 1955
Bernice Johnson Reagon, interview excerpt from Eyes on the Prize
James Lawson, “Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Statement of Purpose”

Chapter Twelve: Virtual Communities
Bonnie Nardi and Vicki O’Day “Framing Conversations about Technology”
Jeff Dietrich, “Refusing to Hope in a God of Technology”
The Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, “Television: The Drug of the Nation”
Tony Earley, “Somehow Form a Family”
Jake Mulholland and Adrienne Martin, “Tune Out”
David Bell, “Cyberculture and Communities”

Case Study: The Netizen & Citizen Action: Does the Internet Promote Democracy?
Jon Katz, “Birth of a Digital Nation”
Simon Davies and Ian Angell, “Double Clicking on Democracy”
Cass Sunstein, “Exposure to Other Viewpoints is Vital to Democracy”

Thematic approach: focusing on ideas. This approach appeals to instructors who imagine their composition courses as forums for the exploration of ideas. Students need challenging reading material with which to develop their critical thinking skills, and specific arguments to which to respond in their writing. For this approach you might choose one or two themes for the semester that will be explored in conjunction with learning how to read, write, research, and argue. Chapter One introduces a number of potential themes and issues while it gets students working on
the activities for the semester. While students are working on exercises in Chapters Two, Three, and Four, you can weave in some readings on a particular theme, putting the readings into conversation with one another. Chapters Six through Twelve already offer a range of themes: Community, Family, School, Globalization, Environmentalism, Religious Faith, Technology. Here are a few ideas for alternative themes across chapters, with suggested readings. (You will find additional ideas listed in a summary of each chapter beginning on page 62.)

- **Public vs. Private life**
  
  Benjamin Franklin, excerpts from his “Autobiography” (Chapter One)
  
  Thoreau, excerpts from *Walden* (Chapter Three) and “Civil Disobedience” (Chapter Six)
  
  Carol Bly, “Enemy Evenings” (Chapter Six)
  
  Margaret Talbot, “A Mighty Fortress” (Chapter Seven)
  
  Stephen Carter, “Culture of Disbelief” (Chapter Eleven)
  
  Wendy Kaminer, “The Last Taboo” (Chapter Eleven)

- **Vocation & Work**

  Benjamin Franklin, excerpts from his “Autobiography” (Chapter One)
  
  Henry David Thoreau, from *Walden* (Chapter Three) and “Civil Disobedience” (Chapter Six)
  
  Roger Garrison, “Why am I in College?” (Chapter Eight)
  
  bell hooks, “Engaged Pedagogy” (Chapter Eight)
  
  Henry Louis Gates, Jr. “Delusions of Grandeur” (Chapter Eight)
  
  Roz Chast, “One Morning, While Getting Dressed” (cartoon) (Chapter Nine)

- **Popular Culture**

  Lee Judge, “How Could This Happen?” (cartoon) (Chapter Six)
  
  Margaret Talbot, “A Mighty Fortress” (Chapter Seven)
  
  Mark Seliger, “Melissa’s Secret” (photograph) (Chapter Seven)
  
  Jeff Riedel, “Inward Christian Soldiers” (photograph) (Chapter Seven)
Peter Sacks, “The Sandbox Experiment” (Chapter Eight)
Tom Beaudoin, “Experience is Key” (Chapter Eleven)
Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, “Television: The Drug of the Nation” (Chapter Twelve)
Jon Katz, “Birth of a Digital Nation” (Chapter Twelve)

- **Cultural diversity / multicultural perspectives**
  Ralph Ellison, “Prologue” to *Invisible Man* (Chapter One)
  Fatima Mernissi, “Moonlit Nights of Laughter,” (Chapter Seven)
  James McBride, “Black Power” (Chapter Seven)
  Ngugi wa Thiongo, “Decolonising the Mind” (Chapter Nine)
  James L. Watson, “China’s Big Mac Attack” (Chapter Nine)
  Benjamin Barber, “Jihad vs. McWorld” (Chapter Nine)
  Slavenka Drakulic, “On Bad Teeth” (Chapter Nine)
  Betita Martinez, “Where was the Color in Seattle?” (Chapter Nine)
  Austin and Schill, “Activists of Color” (Chapter Ten)
  Franklin, “Another Day’s Journey” (Chapter Eleven)

- **Gender relations**
  Anzia Yezierska, “America and I” (Chapter One)
  Susan B. Anthony, “Women’s Right to Vote” (Chapter Four)
  Fatima Mernissi, “Moonlit Nights of Laughter” (Chapter Seven)
  Margaret Talbot, “A Mighty Fortress” (Chapter Seven)
  Ellen Willis, “Why I’m not ‘Pro-Family’” (Chapter Seven)
  James Carville, “Daddies Matter” (Chapter Seven)
  James McBride, “Black Power” (Chapter Seven)
  bell hooks, “Engaged Pedagogy” (Chapter Eight)

- **Use Socrates’s question “How should one live?” to guide you through the first five chapters and readings from the various community chapters, e.g.**
  Ursula Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas” (Chapter Six)
  Margaret Talbot, “A Mighty Fortress” (Chapter Seven)
  Roger Garrison, “Why am I in College?” (Chapter Eight)
David Orr, “Saving Future Generations from Global Warming” (Chapter Ten)
Anne Lamott, “Why I Make Sam Go to Church” (Chapter Eleven)
Tony Earley, “Somehow Form a Family” (Chapter Twelve).
(There are, of course, many variations on such a list.)

Generic approach: focusing on writing genres. This approach appeals to instructors who imagine their composition courses as craft workshops for examining and experimenting with forms and styles of writing. Students need exposure to many different genres and voices. They need to observe the decisions made by authors, and the effects authors’ decisions and their genres have on readers. For this approach, you might begin with the rhetoric chapters, which provide a number of exercises asking students to experiment with different genres. Then you might use the readings in those chapters and in the second part of the book to explore the ways writers use genres to develop a line of reasoning, or to persuade an audience. Chapter One is a good beginning unit because it introduces genres from dictionary definitions to government documents to advertising copy to several variations on the personal narrative. The first inquiry of Chapter Three asks students to examine the differences between Thoreau’s Walden, the poem “Thinking About Thoreau,” and a scene from the play The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail. And Chapter Four’s inquiry on visual arguments includes an exercise on developing a visual argument of students’ own.

The following list could serve as an alternative table of contents for the book. Some readings show up in more than one location, showing that writers often draw on the conventions of multiple genres, or they write outside expected conventions altogether.

- **Fiction:**
  Ralph Ellison, Prologue to Invisible Man (Chapter One)
  Ursula Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas” (Chapter Six)
• **Memoir/Autobiography:**
  Benjamin Franklin, “Autobiography” (Chapter One)
  Anzia Yezierska, “America and I” (Chapter One)
  James McBride, “Black Power” (Chapter Seven)
  Fatima Mernissi, “Moonlit Nights of Laughter” (Chapter Seven)
  John Haines, “Snow” (Chapter Ten)
  Anne Lamott, “Why I Make Sam Go to Church” (Chapter Eleven)
  Bernice Johnson Reagon, interview from *Eyes on the Prize* (Chapter Eleven)
  Tony Earley, “Somehow Form a Family” (Chapter Twelve)

• **Poetry:**
  Amy Belding Brown, “Thinking About Thoreau” (Chapter Three)
  Robert Frost, “Mending Wall” (Chapter Six)
  Muriel Rukeyser, “St. Roach” (Chapter Ten)
  John Clare, “The Badger” (Chapter Ten)
  Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, “Television: The Drug of the Nation” (Chapter Twelve)

• **Journalism:**
  **Reportage:**
  Mark Obmascik, “Massacre at Columbine High” (Chapter Six)
  George Dohrmann, “U Basketball Program Accused of Academic Fraud” (Chapter Eight)
  Mike Carter, “Mayor declares civil emergency” (Chapter Nine)

  **Interviews/personal journalism**
  Margaret Talbot, “A Mighty Fortress” (Chapter Seven)
  Katherine Rosman, “Mormon Family Values” (Chapter Eleven)

• **Editorial/critical analysis:**
  Newspaper editorials from the
  *San Francisco Chronicle* (on Columbine, Chapter Six)
  *Orlando Sentinel* (on Columbine, Chapter Six)
  *Seattle Times* (on Dan Quayle, Chapter Seven)
  *Christian Science Monitor* (on Dan Quayle, Chapter Seven)
William J. Bennett, “Leave Marriage Alone” (Chapter Seven)
Arthur Levine and Jeanette Cureton, “Collegiate Life: An Obituary”
   (Chapter Eight)
Henry Louis Gates, Jr. “Delusions of Grandeur” (Chapter Eight)
Thomas Friedman, “Senseless in Seattle” (Chapter Nine)
David Orr, “Saving Future Generations from Global Warming”
   (Chapter Ten)
Wendy Kaminer, “The Last Taboo: Why America Needs Atheism”
   (Chapter Eleven)
Jeff Dietrich, “Refusing to Hope in a God of Technology” (Chapter Twelve)

• Cultural Analysis:
  Jeff Stark, “We Called It ‘Littlefun’” (Chapter Six)
  David North, “The Columbine High School Massacre” (Chapter Six)
  Tim Wise, “School Shootings and the Price of White Denial”
   (Chapter Six)
  Mary Pipher, “Beliefs About Families” (Chapter Seven)
  Dan Quayle, “Restoring Basic Values” (Chapter Seven)
  Ellen Willis, “Why I’m Not ‘Pro-Family’” (Chapter Seven)
  James Carville, “Daddies Matter” (Chapter Seven)
  Arthur Levine and Jeanette Cureton, “Collegiate Life: An Obituary”
   (Chapter Eight)
  bell hooks, “Engaged Pedagogy” (Chapter Eight)
  Peter Sacks, “The Sandbox Experiment” (Chapter Eight)
  Roger Garrison, “Why Am I in College?” (Chapter Eight)
  Murray Sperber, “Cheating” (Chapter Eight)
  Ngugi wa Thiongo, “Decolonising the Mind” (Chapter Nine)
  James L. Watson, “China’s Big Mac Attack” (Chapter Nine)
  Benjamin R. Barber, “Jihad vs. McWorld” (Chapter Nine)
  Slavenka Drakulic, “On Bad Teeth” (Chapter Nine)
  Elizabeth (Betita) Martinez, “Where was the Color in Seattle?”
   (Chapter Nine)
  Regina Austin and Michael Schill, “Activists of Color” (Chapter Ten)
  Stephen Carter, “The Culture of Disbelief” (Chapter Eleven)
Tom Beaudoin, “Experience is Key” (Chapter Eleven)
Wendy Kaminer, “The Last Taboo: Why America Needs Atheism”
   (Chapter Eleven)
Bonnie Nardi and Vicki O’Day, “Framing Conversations about
   Technology” (Chapter Twelve)
Jon Katz, “Birth of a Digital Nation” (Chapter Twelve)
Simon Davies and Ian Angell, “Double Clicking on Democracy”
   (Chapter Twelve)
Cass Sunstein, “Exposure to Other Viewpoints is Vital to
   Democracy” (Chapter Twelve)

- **Manifesto/Proposal:**
  Declaration of Independence (Chapter Two)
  Susan B. Anthony, “Women’s Right to Vote” (Chapter Four)
  Black Panthers, Ten Point Plan (Chapter Four)
  Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience” (Chapter Six)
  Carol Bly, “Enemy Evenings” (Chapter Six)
  Darrell Scott, “Our Greatest Need” (Chapter Six)
  James Lawson, “Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
    Statement of Purpose” (Chapter Eleven)

- **Official/Legal Documents:**
  Excerpts from the United States Constitution (Chapter One)
  Excerpts from INS Naturalization form N-400 (Chapter One)
  Excerpt from *Report of the Special Senate Committee on Student
     Academic Integrity* at the University of Minnesota (Chapter
     Eight)

- **Academic Research Articles:**
  Murray Sperber, “Cheating” (Chapter Eight)
  Ngugi wa Thiongo, “Decolonising the Mind” (Chapter Nine)
  James L. Watson, “China’s Big Mac Attack” (Chapter Nine)
  Benjamin R. Barber, “Jihad vs. McWorld” (Chapter Nine)
  Tom Beaudoin, “Experience is Key” (Chapter Eleven)
  Robert M. Franklin, “Another Day’s Journey: Faith Communities
     Renewing American Democracy” (Chapter Eleven)
David Bell, “Cyberculture and Communities” (Chapter Twelve)

- **Student writing:**
  Holly Van De Venter, “Educating the New America” (Chapter Five)
  Jake Mulholland and Adrienne Martin, “Tune Out” (Chapter Twelve)

- **Citizen Action Writing: letters, speeches, pamphlets:**
  Darrell Scott, “Our Greatest Need” (Chapter Six)
  AOL PACT (Parents and Children Together) (Chapter Six)
  Letters to the Editor of the StarTribune (Chapter Eight)
  Excerpts from *A Citizen’s Guide to the World Trade Organization* (Chapter Nine)
  Martin Luther King, Jr., speech at Holt Street Baptist Church (Chapter Twelve)

- **Visual Texts:**
  Marisa Acocella, “This isn’t for me—it’s for the economy.” (cartoon) (Chapter One)
  ConsumerFreedom.com (advertisement) (Chapter One)
  Covington Millennium Mosaic Project, “You Belong Here!” (public art) (Stop and Think Box, Chapter Six)
  Lee Judge, “How Could This Happen?” (cartoon) (Chapter Six)
  Mark Seliger, “Melissa’s Secret” (photograph) (Chapter Seven)
  Jeff Riedel, “Inward Christian Soldiers” (photograph) (Chapter Seven)
  “For Rutgers Alumni – A Time to Choose” (advertisement) (Chapter Eight)
  Roz Chast, “One Morning, While Getting Dressed” (cartoon) (Chapter Nine)
  Tom Tomorrow, “This Modern World” (cartoon) (Chapter Nine)
  Metropolis (film still) (Chapter Twelve)

**Problem-based learning approach: focusing on case studies.** This approach appeals to instructors who see their composition courses as spaces where students learn how to use the content and skills of the course to work out
real-life problems. In other words, the learning objectives are set up as problems for the students to solve. For this approach to work, students need relevant scenarios on which to practice their problem-solving techniques (critical thinking, reading, writing).

Chapter One is a good beginning because the inquiries have students solving problems and using skills before they’re officially taught them, which is a core principle of problem-based learning. After working through Chapter One, you can have students reflect on how much they already knew about citizenship, and have them draw up individual and perhaps collective learning objectives for the semester. Then, unlike the other approaches, you might turn to Part Two, the readings chapters first, and pull out exercises from Chapters Two-Five as necessary to help students solve the problems of the case studies. As you read each chapter, discussion could center on the ways various communities define themselves, and on the ethical dilemmas posed in the case studies. Students can then form teams and think and write as members of the communities.

After students have read through a case study, ask them to work through the following steps in their teams:

- Explore the issues. What’s going on here? What is at stake?
- Define the problem. Write out a problem statement. You might phrase this in various ways; e.g., what is the ethical dilemma this community is facing? What is this community disagreeing about? What is the thing that is threatening to drive this community apart? (Note: this step will be the most difficult one, and will be the one groups should spend the most time on. You can’t move effectively to proposing solutions if you don’t define the problem clearly.)
- Discuss and investigate possible solutions.
- Research supporting knowledge. (Note: when you are introducing this process in class you can skip this step since it requires them to leave the classroom and do research.)
- Choose the best solution for this community.
- Draw up a detailed plan to implement this solution. It must be able to be implemented by the community members themselves.
- Review your performance by comparing your answers with those of your classmates and experts.

In our experience, the Columbine shootings are an excellent case study to begin with, because most students relate to the event in some way. The event is relevant and relatively current, which will help them maneuver the problem-solving process. Students will notice that the authors of the various readings frame the Columbine shootings as a failure of individual will, family unity, parental guidance, high school communities, and American capitalist culture, to name just a few. Focusing on this and other case studies allows students to think critically about the events and frame the issue for themselves, practice research skills to inform themselves, and practice argumentative skills to foster rigorous discussion.

The do-it-yourself case study in Chapter Ten is an excellent one with which to end the semester because it allows students to apply the researching and problem-solving techniques they have observed in the readings and practiced in the earlier case studies.

All three of the above approaches, of course, are not mutually exclusive. You will probably find your own approach borrows a bit from each.

**What syllabi using *Composing a Civic Life* might look like**

In Chapter One of *CCL*, we make the point that the United States is a political community organized around a written constitution and body of laws and governed by written procedures. The class works in a similar way. How the class will run, what rights and responsibilities students will have, how they should complete their learning tasks should be outlined in the course syllabus. The more carefully you craft it, the more effectively your class will run.

In addition to describing course content, the syllabus sets a tone for the course. Will it be well organized or improvisational? Democratic or
autocratic? Discussion based or lecture based? Michael Berndt tends to set a serious, professional tone for his classes, sounding tougher on paper than he is in real life. He believes that setting a rigorous, no-nonsense tone at the beginning teaches students that he takes his job and his students seriously. Amy Muse sets up the class as a community that will be bound together by its common interest (the course material) and its shared ethics (which are established collectively on the first day of class). She believes that getting students to consider themselves a community from the beginning helps them to become more involved. Although we do so differently, both of us emphasize the responsibilities of the students for their own learning and for the success of the class as a whole.

We suggest your syllabi include the following items, although you may want to change around the order:

- **Contact information.** Where students can find you, how you prefer to be contacted, and when students can reach you.
- **Course description.** Students are usually introduced to a class through the description in your college’s catalog. You may want to include this overview or one of your own.
- **Learning outcomes.** Here you can identify how the general points in the course description will be realized in actual habits of mind and research or communication skills.
- **Major assignments.** Here you can identify how the learning outcomes will be achieved, showing consistency between your vision for the class and their activities.
- **Informal writing.** Here you might identify the types of writing they will do in addition to or as part of large, formal assignments. This might include any journals or writer’s notebooks that you want them to keep.
- **Course policies.** Here you can outline how attendance, plagiarism, disruptive behavior, and so on will be addressed.
- **Schedule.** You might include not only a list of assignment due dates, but an itemized schedule for when particular subjects will be discussed. These schedules help students anticipate their workloads, ensuring that you’ll have fewer problems with late assignments, and so on.
Most of us introduce the syllabus the first day of class. The problem with this is that it may set a dull tone for the class. Students may also misread you as an instructor who is more interested in following policy than in dynamic learning. Here are a few suggestions we’ve picked up from teaching and from colleagues for introducing course policies.

- Begin the first day with a discussion of critical reading. Then, have students exercise critical reading skills by reading the syllabus at home and reporting back to the next class.
- Begin with a general discussion of inquiry. Then, have students read the syllabus and write down three questions they have about the instructor, the class, or the assignments based on their reading.
- Begin by discussing the influence writing situations have on written texts. Ask the students to get into groups and rewrite one part of the syllabus for a radically different audience (e.g. preschool kids). Then, they can read their rewrites out loud and discuss why you wrote the real syllabus as you did.
- As we suggest above (p. 7), dive right into Chapter One’s Getting Started activity. Use the insights generated from it (and the students’ energy) to get them to reflect upon the syllabus and the learning objectives for the semester.
Comp 1101 Freshman Composition
4 credits
Spring 2002

Instructor: Michael Berndt
Office: ------
Office Hrs: 2:00-3:00 M-Th
Office Phone: ------
E-mail: ------
Mailbox: English Department
Prerequisites: C or better in Comp 0900 and passing score on Comp 0900 exit exam, or placement in Comp 1101.

Course Description: “In this essential college-level writing course, you will practice the skills necessary for success in college and professional writing. You will develop and apply critical reading and thinking skills in a variety of research and writing assignments, including analysis and argument, with some essays based on literary texts and other sources.”

Course Objectives: Here’s how we’ll put the official course description into action:
• We will learn to analyze writing situations, deciding how best to achieve our purpose, depending on our subject and audience.
• We will follow a writing process that breaks down writing assignments into more manageable steps.
• We will analyze written works to discover the writers’ claims and evaluate the quality of their evidence. We will also learn to apply their writing strategies to our own prose.
• We will learn strategies for focusing our ideas, organizing them clearly, and developing them with specifics.
• We will learn how to clarify our writing making it more accessible and more fluent.
• We’ll learn to write and revise collaboratively.
Required Materials:
Berndt, Michael and Amy Muse. *Composing a Civic Life*. Student Packet available at the Bookstore.
Berndt, Michael, ed. *Composing a Civic Life: Readings Packet*. Copies of this packet are on reserve in the library.
Notebook for your journal and two computer disks

If you haven't set up an e-mail account, contact the Computer Center. I check my e-mail everyday, and I encourage you all to maintain a dialog with me as you go through the course.

Major Assignments: This course focuses on the process of writing as well as its products, therefore you will do multiple drafts and in-class activities prior to the submission of your final drafts. *For the process to work, you must keep up on drafts. If you do not, I will lower your final paper grade one letter grade for each missing draft or for each draft that shows no attempt to revise (e.g. a B paper with one missing draft will receive a C)*. Working hard at the beginning of a unit will save you anxiety near the end. If a draft or final essay is submitted late, I may accept it but you will be graded down one letter grade for each day it is late. If you ever run into emergencies, like a serious illness, I won't penalize you but bring evidence such as a doctor’s note and contact me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements for you to submit the work.

**Grading Standards:** Grades for your essays will reflect the following descriptions:

*A* (4.0) Superior. Original. Thoughtful. This essay directly and powerfully addresses the assignment. The ideas are original, insightful, and meet the audience’s needs exceptionally well. The thesis is fresh, clear, and covers the entire scope of the essay. The essay is well-organized and well-developed with relevant, specific examples. The writing is clear, fluent, and free of usage problems.
B  (3.0) Good. Fairly original. Clear. This essay addresses the assignment in a relatively fresh way. The ideas are thoughtful and clear with good organization and development. The thesis is clear and generally covers all the information in the essay. The writing is relatively clear, smooth, and free of major usage problems.

C  (2.0) Average. Adequate. Competent. This essay fulfills the requirements of the assignment and demonstrates competent college writing. The ideas are clear, but there is usually a problem with the thesis (e.g., doesn’t cover all the information), organization (e.g., is too rigid and doesn’t reflect demands of the thesis), or development (e.g., isn’t balanced or specific enough). The writing is moderately clear but has occasional moments of awkward usage.

D  (1.0) Below average. Underdeveloped. Derivative. This essay addresses the assignment only generally. It may have a clear thesis but it isn’t sufficiently supported by evidence or examples. There are serious organization or usage problems. The paper is derivative, fails to meet the audience’s needs, or shows a misunderstanding of the subject.

No Credit  Incoherent. Undeveloped. Highly derivative. The paper does not address the assignment. The ideas are almost entirely derived from other sources and show a serious misunderstanding of the assignment. The thesis is not identifiable, and the writing is marred by serious organization and usage problems.

I also grade the papers in increments of the grades listed above (e.g., A-, B+, C-). I also occasionally give split grades as a motivational tool. This means if you get, for example, an A-/B+, you have an opportunity to raise your B+ to an A- if you do better than a B+ on your next paper; the intent of this policy is to encourage those of you who are very close to doing better work to put in the extra effort. I will not give split grades on your Researched Argument Essay or your Social Action Project.
Your semester grade will be determined using the following criteria:

- Paper One: Defining Citizenship Essay  
  15%
- Paper Two: Analyzing Another Position Essay  
  20%
- Paper Three: Proposal Memo  
  10%
- Paper Four: Researched Argument Essay  
  35%
- Paper Five: Social Action Project  
  10%
- Writer’s Notebook and Quizzes  
  10%

**Submission of Assignments:** All drafts of your essays must be typed and double-spaced. They must have one-inch margins and a 12-point font, of either Times or Helvetica. All paper assignments should be submitted in this order: 1) final draft, 2) rough drafts, 3) notebook entries. Bring at least *four copies* of your drafts to your peer review sessions and make sure you keep extra copies of your papers; you shouldn’t quit working on a paper just because I’m looking at your only draft. Also save your work on two disks; one disk might fail, but not two. Here is the schedule for submitting drafts:

- The Civic Life Essay, purp. struct. or zero draft  
  Thurs., January 31
- The Civic Life Essay, draft one  
  Tues., February 5
- The Civic Life Essay, final draft  
  Tues., February 12
- Critical Response Essay, draft one  
  Thurs., February 28
- Critical Response Essay, final draft  
  Thurs., March 7
- Proposal Memo, draft one  
  Thurs., March 28
- Proposal Memo, final draft  
  Thurs., April 4
- Researched Argument Essay, draft one  
  Mon., April 15
- Researched Argument Essay, final draft  
  Thurs., May 2
- Social Action Project, draft one  
  Wednes., May 8
- Social Action Project, final draft  
  T.B.A.

**Academic Integrity:** A student who submits a paper which in whole or in part has been written by someone else or which contains passages quoted or paraphrased from another person’s writing without proper acknowledgment (quotation marks around direct passages and internal documentation) is guilty of plagiarism (this includes material from electronic sources). This is a serious offense. In the least, plagiarism will cause you to fail an assignment; at worst, you may fail the course. We will work together to understand what plagiarism is and how it can be avoided. You can do your part by being honest and asking...
questions when you are not certain what is considered plagiarism. You should also promote a professional atmosphere in the class by showing respect for me and your fellow students; turn off pagers and cell phones, and leave food outside the classroom.

**Writer’s Notebook:** The notebook is a good opportunity to practice your writing, to reinforce class lessons, and to exercise critical thinking. Entries will be assigned in class. Some will ask you to respond to the readings; others will ask you to practice different aspects of your writing. Some entries will quiz you on how closely you’ve read the assigned readings. If you do all the entries and put good-faith effort into them you’ll get the full credit. *Notebook entries should be around one notebook page or one typed, double-spaced page.*

**Attendance:** For this course to be successful, you must attend and participate actively. *If you miss four classes (one week) your grade may be affected in borderline cases. If you miss eight classes your grade will be reduced by one letter grade. If you miss twelve classes you will fail the course.* If you know you will be absent, please e-mail me or call and leave a voice message. I can then get materials to you and help you keep up. Also, if you are continually late for class, I will begin marking you absent. When you come in late, it distracts me and everyone else in the class.

**Conferences:** By participating in this course, you can expect me to be clear in my expectations and feedback. If you are having trouble with the course, or if you only want to discuss your writing, please see me as soon as possible. Always bring your writing materials with you. Come to my office any time during my office hours, or schedule an appointment.

**This syllabus is available in alternate media by request.**
**EngC 1814: University Writing and Critical Reading:**

*Citizenship and Public Ethics--Honors section*

Section 1 * Fall 1999

Monday & Wednesday 1:25-2:15 Lind Hall 340

Wednesday 6:00-9:00 p.m. Jane Addams School for Democracy

Dr. Amy Muse

Office: ----  office phone: -----  
office hours: Mon. & Wed. 2:30-4:00; Friday 11:15-1:00, and by appt.
e-mail: -----

“Good writing is about telling the truth.” --Anne Lamott

“Participation does make better citizens. I believe it, but I can’t prove it. And neither can anyone else.” --Jane Mansbridge

**Course Description:** In this composition course we will explore issues of citizenship and public ethics theoretically and practically through our reading, thinking, discussing, writing, and community action. For the theoretical component we will be reading classical and contemporary works on various citizenship and public ethics issues, such as the nature of citizenship, the relationship between individuals and the state, and the rights and responsibilities we all have in relation to one another; and we will be writing analyses of the readings and formal academic essays that require careful research, analysis, and argumentation. For the practical component we will be participating in a program at the Jane Addams School for Democracy in the West Side neighborhood of St. Paul, in which we will work with community members, most of whom are immigrants, on literacy issues and preparation for citizenship exams, among other things, and will keep journals reflecting on our experience there and its impact on our ideas about citizenship and public ethics.

**Course Objectives:** It is the primary objective of this course to encourage you to get actively involved in the composition process and to experience writing as a tool that enables you to work through ethical issues from
inquiry to action: from your initial explorations, when you use writing to sort through information, focus your own thoughts, and analyze issues, to the stages of action, when you use writing to communicate with others and to take some sort of public, citizen action. In short, the objective is for you to experience several different ways in which writing matters. Through the readings, class discussions, informal and formal writing assignments, and practical experience, you should acquire the thinking and communication skills that will prepare you well for academic work and empower you to be more confident, committed, and compassionate citizens and scholars.

The course is divided into three units:

**Weeks 1-6: Citizenship: Writing to Clarify Thoughts and Develop Definitions:** In this unit, we focus on writing to define our positions and discuss the meanings of citizenship, historically and currently, centering on the relationship between and the rights and responsibilities of the individual and the state. We’ll read *Antigone* as well as a number of classic and contemporary essays on citizenship. The unit culminates in an essay in which you define for yourselves, drawing on personal experience and the readings, the question, “what does it mean to be a citizen?”

**Weeks 7-13: Public Ethics: Writing to “Go Under” an Issue:** In this unit, we focus on some public ethics issues: the perceived decline in civic life, public & private life, war and violence in our society, our relation to animals and the environment, poverty, class conflict, and immigration. The unit will culminate in a research paper in which you investigate an issue, construct a framework for understanding it, analyze and explain it and explore its implications for a specific audience.

**Weeks 13-15: Public Citizens: Writing to Persuade Others to Take Action:** In this last unit you take the research you conducted for Essay 2 and “take it public” by using it to support an argument for a public audience. Essay 3 does not have to be a formal essay; it can take the form of a public education campaign, pamphlet, letter to an editor or congressperson or CEO or other responsible party, Web page or substantial response to someone else’s Web page, story for local paper, speech, anthology of life stories or histories or interviews, documentary or fictional film, and so on.
Course Materials:
Texts:
Berndt and Muse, Composing a Civic Life
Sophocles, Antigone
Loeb, Soul of a Citizen
Addams, Twenty Years at Hull-House
Hairston, Ruszkiewicz, and Friend, The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers

a good college dictionary and thesaurus (recommended)
paper and pen for writing in class
a lightweight pocket folder or ring binder to hold your journal
a manila folder or pocket folder to hold your essays

Course Requirements:
3 formal essays
1-2 page typed responses to each reading
1-2 page typed or neatly handwritten reflections on each week’s Jane Addams School visit
5-minute reading quizzes on material from The Scott, Foresman Handbook

Essay 1 (definition) 15%
Essay 2 (research & analysis) 25%
Essay 3 (public action) 20%
Journal: Reading Responses and Reflections 20%
Scott, Foresman Handbook Quizzes 10%
Class Participation 10%

Quizzes
Expect daily quizzes on the readings from the Scott, Foresman Handbook. These will generally be quick and short and will ask you to solve various writing problems; they are designed to test your understanding of the concepts and prepare you to apply the concepts in your classwork.
Always show up with your textbooks, completed homework, extra paper, and pen. We will do a substantial amount of in-class writing, preparing your papers in steps. You are expected to use the time given to work productively on your papers. Note that on “peer review” days in particular, you will be asked to leave class, and will receive an unexcused absence, if you fail to come prepared with a typed, complete draft of the current paper.

**Class Policies:**
All major essays are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Papers turned in on the due date but after the class period will lose one-half letter grade; papers turned in after the due date lose one letter grade per day late. If you fail to turn in any of the essays, you will fail the course.

Late homework is accepted only in the case of excused absences, and must be accompanied by a written excuse and turned in on the first day you return to class.

**Class Participation:**
Active class participation is expected. This entails not only attending class, bringing the proper materials, and completing assignments on time, but reading actively and critically, joining in class discussions, actively engaging in thoughtful review and critique of your peers’ essays, working actively on your in-class writing, and listening attentively to your instructor and classmates. Active involvement in the class nearly always results in greater enjoyment and higher grades.
What assignments using *Composing a Civic Life* might look like

Assignments are often difficult to write. In our syllabi, we can say so easily that students will learn critical literacy, that they will understand how to analyze writing situations, and that they will develop strategies for arguing effectively. Now we have to translate those promises into specific activities, activities that students will recognize as relevant and valuable. Therefore, when we write assignments, we write as much for ourselves as for students. We write to clarify what we want students to do and why. When you craft writing assignments for students, we encourage you to include the following items:

- *How does this assignment fit into the course sequence?* You might provide a brief narrative linking the assignment with others and with their intellectual progress through the course.

- *What will students learn by doing this assignment?* Here you might identify your learning objectives. To make these objectives easier for students to visualize, we tend to break the objectives into intellectual and writing goals, even though they are bound closely together.

- *How will students accomplish this assignment?* To get students going and to show that assignments follow the general stages of the writing or research processes, we usually break up an assignment into formal and informal activities leading up to the final draft.

- *How will students be graded?* To show that assessment really represents how well they’ve mastered the learning objectives, we usually provide the criteria by which they will be evaluated.

In addition to clarifying just what we, as instructors, want, we should also let students assess good and bad examples. Being able to visualize what their essay might look like often inspires students to get to work.
Defining the Civic Life
Michael Berndt

This essay continues our study of citizenship by asking you to report on your civic life, your experiences as a member of a particular group. Usually the term *civic life* refers to membership in a political group like a town, state, or nation, but it could also mean membership in political parties, churches, civic organizations, sports leagues, or any community groups.

The intellectual goals of this assignment are 1) to recognize how your identity is bound up with the ideals and practices of larger groups, and 2) to analyze your experiences, developing the habit of reflecting on who you are and how you want to live.

The writing goals of this assignment are three-fold. I want you to learn how 1) to focus your essay around a main point, 2) to structure the essay effectively, and 3) to develop that structure with vivid, specific details that *show* us your overall point.

Because the civic life means different things to different individuals, you have some flexibility with how you develop your main point. Here are several possibilities to get you thinking:

- Tell a personal story that illustrates a point you want to make about what the civic life means to you. Use the story to set up a further discussion of your point.
- Compare and contrast experiences as a member of different communities.
- Analyze a recent event to show how it exemplifies some point about what the civic life means to you.
- Introduce a point about what your membership in a community means to you and then show how the truth of that point has been demonstrated in several different experiences, relationships, or ways.

Your essay should be 4-5 pages. I will evaluate it based on five criteria, listed in decreasing order of importance:

1) Focus. Do you have an overall point to make about your membership in a particular community? Are all parts of the essay relevant to this overall point?
2) Structure. Is the essay easy to follow? Is the organization progressive?
3) Development. Do you really push your analyses? Can we visualize your points for ourselves?
4) Style. Are all your points clear? Is the style appropriate for the your subject, purpose, and audience?
5) Grammar. Have you carefully proofread each sentence?
Personal Narrative: *Twenty Five Things Your Tour Guide Never Told You*

A Classroom Book Project

Michael Berndt

New college students often struggle to adjust to the college community. They get lost, their check bounces, their bike is stolen, their roommate has B.O.—you know what I’m talking about. Wouldn’t it be nice to help these students out by telling them your own horror stories, stories that show that their problems are not unique, and then offering advice on how to solve these problems?

I want you to identify a problem that you experienced or that someone you know experienced as a college student, preferably a problem that campus tour guides would not prepare new students to deal with. Write a two-page account of what happened and how it was resolved. Then, consult campus information or call around until you find out the best way to prevent and/or resolve this concern. Seek out as many different resources as possible. Write a two-page account of what you learned; organize the information so it reads like a step-by-step process—something students could read and implement directly. Finally, synthesize the two essays into a three- to four-page essay; the narrative will set up the problem that your process part will teach readers how to solve.

I am looking for an entertaining but informative piece, appropriate for a campus or city newspaper column, that will help new students adjust to college life. You can choose a very serious topic like racial discrimination or a minor annoyance like parking. The purpose of this paper is five-fold.

1. You will learn to use personal narratives and descriptive writing to create a lively or moving story that makes a point.
2. You will use writing as a cognitive tool, learning to shape your memories into coherent stories with an easily recognized meaning.
3. You will learn to imagine the reading audience (in this case, your fellow students and me) and that audience’s demands in putting together the essay.
4. You will engage in nonlibrary research, seeing how many resources exist for gathering information besides the library.
5. You will learn to describe a process with clarity and concision. Writers in the workplace are frequently asked to explain a procedure; you need to know how to lead readers through a process without confusing them.

When I evaluate your final draft, I will assess how well you meet the assignment’s purposes. What we do with the essays afterwards will depend on their quality and on opportunities for publication. You would be under no obligation to do anything with the essay if you didn't want to, so choose a topic that moves you personally, not what you think would entertain the general populace.
Critical Response: Analyzing an Opposing Viewpoint
Michael Berndt

In Chapter Two, we learned that, as critical thinkers, we should let our opinions develop from our assessment of all relevant sources, not just those that support our preexisting opinions. This requires of us an ability to analyze positions different from our own and to understand what values, experiences, visions, or missions motivate the supporters of these positions.

The value of this skill is three-fold. This ability may prevent us from uncritically dismissing both those opinions different from our own and the opinions’ proponents.

For this 4-5 page essay you can begin by selecting an issue about which people are arguing, and research one position on that issue. You should select a position that is not your own, since exploring what motivates an opposing viewpoint helps to develop empathy. For example, if you favor an open-door immigration policy, you might explore the position of those who favor restrictions, trying to understand what beliefs, fears, or visions of America motivate their policy choices. Your purpose is not to attack that position but to analyze it objectively, to understand, from the proponents’ perspective, why they hold that position in the first place. Here are the steps to go through in writing this essay:

1. SELECT A TOPIC AND DISCOVER DIFFERENT POSITIONS ON IT.
To avoid committing the false dilemma fallacy, believing there are only two positions on any one issue, you should review a range of arguments about your selected topic. This means reading a wide selection of opinions (at least ten or more) to get a sense of the different positions out there. For example, if you choose abortion, you might examine billboards, editorials, the Supreme Court’s opinion in Roe v. Wade (1973), books, and so on to identify the different positions. Then, find one or two of those sources which represent the opposing position you want to explore. Your purpose in selecting one or two specific essays, books, and so on is to have something specific to analyze. You can really only discover what another side’s views are and why its proponents believe them by analyzing samples of their own arguments.

2. READ YOUR ONE OR TWO SOURCES CAREFULLY.
Read the sources actively, identifying important points and asking questions. Then, in your journal answer the following questions for each source:
a. What is the main point?
b. What evidence does the author provide?
c. What assumptions does the author make?
d. What rhetorical strategies are used?
e. What information is left out?
Your purpose here is to understand your selected sources thoroughly.

3. IDENTIFY THE UNDERLYING VALUES, IDEAS.
In your journal, use brainstorming strategies to get at the underlying values and ideas. You might try answering the following questions:
a. What beliefs do members of this group share?
b. How would they define the issue?
c. Why is this issue important to them?

4. WRITE THE ESSAY.
Your purpose in this essay is to help us understand why individuals advocate a particular position. Your essay should a) identify the opposing position, b) summarize its main arguments, c) identify the assumptions that motivate that position, and d) discuss those assumptions in more detail. You might accomplish the last point by doing a comparison/contrast of the assumptions motivating their position and your own, with the purpose of discovering the basis for your disagreement. Your conclusion might speculate on the possibilities of reaching some kind of compromise.
Literacy Autobiography
Amy Muse

What does “literacy” mean? What is an “autobiography”? We will begin with these questions and open them to exploration. Do you remember when you first learned the alphabet or to read and write? How were you socialized into language use, reading, and writing? What has influenced your reading and writing—the ways you think about and practice those activities? What is the function and/or value of writing to you? Have you ever felt illiterate? Is your literacy liberating to you? Have you ever had experiences in which your literacy was a burden or a threat, either to yourself or to someone else?

Product: You have a good bit of flexibility in the content and form of this essay. You may focus on any point or points in your life, explore some of the questions above or pose and answer the questions that are most pertinent to your experience. Some choices might include:

*a chronological history of your language acquisition, your coming to reading and writing, over the course of which you learned (or are learning) something in particular;
*a focus on one or two specific, key moments in your education, language (first or second language) acquisition, travel, or the like;
*a focus on a specific learning method, book, or writing assignment that impacted your experience of your literacy;
*a comparison of your own literacy with that of someone else.

This essay is a personal narrative. Therefore, it is not expected to be as thesis-driven as many academic essays. It is, however, expected that you will have a clear focus, develop your ideas thoughtfully and specifically, and guide readers smoothly through the essay. In contrast with your daily reading responses, in which you can simply express your thoughts and feelings, in this essay you are expected to communicate with readers.

Process: We will compose the essays by planting seeds early and letting them germinate through several draft assignments, and you’ll also have time to develop, deepen, and complicate them, in conference with me, with one another, with other readers, and/or with tutors in the Center for Writing.

First full working draft due for workshopping:  -----  
Deepened draft due:     -----  
Complete, developed draft due for peer-reviewing:  -----  
Final draft due for evaluation:    -----  

Length: 6-8 pages
Ethics Case Study: A Collaborative Writing Project
Michael Berndt

To take advantage of our society’s increasing concern with ethics, you and four other class members will form an ethical consultation firm. Its purpose is to analyze an ethical dilemma in the news and recommend a solution. This essay follows from the first essay by asking you to put your ideas about the civic life into action.

This assignment encourages you to think about issues in ethics by having you analyze a complex moral situation. It will develop your writing skills by having you describe the situation with clarity, and offer a thoughtful but practicable solution. It will also require you to write persuasively to convince your fellow consultants (and the company who has hired you) to adopt your solution.

1) This is a group project so the first step is to form your five member firms. If you wish, you may come up with a company name to put on your papers. Your group will discuss an example dilemma in class (see syllabus) to get acquainted with each other’s values. Then, each group will either choose an ethical dilemma from my collection or they will locate their own from newspapers or journals.

2) Once your group has a dilemma, each member should brainstorm in a journal entry, applying their own values to the situation. Each entry should:
   A. Describe the situation from your own perspective (how you describe the problem will reflect what you see as the central issue).
   B. Describe the positions of each of the conflicting parties.
   C. Offer a possible solution to the problem.
   D. Identify possible objections to your solution.
   E. Identify what additional info you’ll need to understand the situation.

3) After getting the additional information, each member will write a four-page draft of their own response to the ethical dilemma. Members can apply their own management philosophies or alter that philosophy if the situation requires it. The draft must include the following (in whatever order seems most appropriate):
   A. Define the problem in relation to your own values.
   B. Present your own solution to the problem with a thorough justification for why your solution is appropriate.
   C. Address possible objections to your solution.
   D. Present a concrete plan of action for resolving the ethical dilemma.
4) You will then bring this draft to class and compare your response with those of others in the group. Your peers will serve as critics both of your ideas and of your report, offering suggestions for both. You may also need to meet outside of class to prepare for the next stage of the assignment.

5) Each group will provide a ten-minute presentation of their results to the class (which will serve as the contracting company). How you present your results is up to you. Whether you present five brief abstracts or one main solution voted on by the group, your format will depend on how each member of the firm responds to the dilemma. As in a real group situation, your group could debate the various responses and vote on one recommendation or you could present these responses as alternatives. However you decide to proceed, you need to make a clear, well-organized presentation.

6) After receiving feedback from the class and discussing your ideas as a group, revise your individual responses and then, as a group, prepare a 1-2 page recommendation that synthesizes your individual responses. This report will serve as a cover letter to the individual essays and set up a context for understanding them. You may want to write the cover letter in preparation for your presentation. The whole will be handed in as one packet.
Researched Argument Essay: A Sequence of Assignments
Michael Berndt

Paper One: Proposal Memo

Because this project is larger, you should prepare a proposal to assess the project's feasibility and provide a working schedule. The format for this proposal will be an internal memo addressed to me, the project manager. It should include the following sections:

A. Introduction:
- Identifies the problem or issue to be addressed
- Presents the question or questions to be researched
- Defines the scope of your inquiry
- Provides enough background information to inform nonexpert audiences.
- Justifies the importance of your project

B. Methodology:
- Explains how you plan to address the problem, describing your research strategy. If you plan to do library research, you must include a bibliography with discussion of at least three sources (to demonstrate that these sources will address the initial problem).

C. Description of the End Product:
- Identifies your intended audience and purpose for the Researched Argument essay
- Explain how your audience will benefit from your research

D. Timetable:
- Provides a schedule for working through the project

This memo is short (2-3 pages single spaced) so you must be brief, precise, and direct. I will evaluate it based on five criteria, listed in decreasing order of importance:

1) Focus. Do you identify your purpose or research question? Will the methodology directly address this purpose or answer this question?
2) Structure. Is the structure clear, logical, and easy to navigate?
3) Development. Can readers take the proposal and successfully complete the research project? Does the author explain what each step in the methodology is supposed to accomplish?
4) Style. Is the writing clear, direct, and concise? Is the tone serious and professional?
5) Grammar. Have you carefully proofread each sentence?
Paper Two: Bibliographic Essay

Research very seldom occurs in a vacuum. Most subjects that you might want to research have already been investigated, and researchers have already been discussing it in journals, magazines, Websites, and so on. For your work to be taken seriously, you need to acknowledge the work done by those citizens and scholars. This means you need to read their work and “place” your own research results in relation to them. You need to show your readers, in your Research Argument Essay, where you fit into the existing conversation.

Before you can do that, however, you need to understand how these citizens’ and scholars’ views relate to one another; you need some sense of what these people believe and how their views compare with one another. Bibliographic essays are designed to 1) teach people what scholars are arguing on a particular issue, and 2) help writers get a handle on all the research that is out there.

Bibliographic essays include the following parts:

1) Introduction:
   - You identify your subject and the scope of your readings (research done over the last ten years, research published in journals, books, or on the Internet).
   - You provide statements describing how these different works you read fit together (e.g. There are three positions readers take on this issue).

2) Summaries:
   - You organize your individual summaries by when they were written, by how the author sees the issue, or by the position the author takes on the issue.
   - You paraphrase your summary of each work, providing just enough detail to show us that your summary is accurate and just.
   - You emphasize those points on which the writers agree or disagree.
   - Your paragraphs are well organized and easy to follow. Transitions reinforce the author’s sense of structure.

3) Conclusion:
   - You bring closure to the essay by suggesting ways the different positions might be reconciled, by suggesting why the positions can’t be reconciled, by suggesting additional areas of research, or by identifying where your own views fit in (assuming you have done enough research to reach your own opinion).
The bibliographic essay must summarize at least 8 different sources; it should be double spaced and 4-5 pages. I will evaluate the essay according to how well it accomplishes the criteria listed above.

*Paper Three: Researched Argument Essay*

Writing a researched argument paper is not about locating evidence to support a pre-existing opinion; it is about asking questions, conducting research to answer those questions, and letting your opinion develop out of the dialogue between your ideas and experiences and those of other scholars or citizens.

Your 6-8 page paper should fully express your position; identify the issue from your perspective, supporting your arguments with evidence; and address opposition to your position. Your goal is to convince us that your position is reasonable because your arguments are well considered and responsible. Since each paper will vary according to the kind of research you do and your intended audience, we will establish criteria individually; nevertheless, the essay should be focused, well organized, highly developed, and written directly, clearly, and gracefully.
Writing to Research and “Go Under” an Issue
Amy Muse

You’ve probably noticed that in much of our public debate we talk about the surface of issues without ever really going under them to examine their ethical foundations. As the culmination of our unit on writing to “go under” issues of public ethics, you will write an essay in which you investigate an issue by exploring and explaining varying perspectives on the issue.

This essay will help you to develop your skills in identifying questions that need to be asked and answered—and selecting the audience who needs to hear them—as well as in conducting traditional library, Internet, and ethnographic research, in constructing an argument, and in communicating your views to a specific audience.

Writing this research paper is not simply doing a “report” on a pre-existing “topic.” It is also not about just locating evidence to support a pre-existing opinion. Instead, it is about asking questions, conducting research to answer those questions, and letting your opinion develop out of the dialogue between your ideas and experiences and those of other scholars and citizens.

Specifically, you will go under this issue by putting into dialogue two sources: an article or book, and a person (or group of people) you interview. You, as the writer, will find the points on which they agree and disagree, different perspectives they bring to the situation, and ways we can understand this issue anew.

How to develop the paper:

(1) Choose an issue you are passionate about and/or want to know more about. I strongly encourage you to examine situations in your own communities and to investigate questions or concerns that arise from your experiences there.

(2) Carefully read through a number of magazines and journals (and perhaps books) to find an interesting and substantive article or book on the issue. Summarize the article in your notebook. Note your reactions to it.

(3) Set up and conduct an interview with someone who cares about this same issue and has experience with it in some way, either as an expert in the field or as someone who has life experience with this issue. (For example, if you were investigating the effect of this year’s state funding on
family farms, you might talk to a legislator involved with that funding, a professor who specializes in the subject, a local banker, or a farmer.)

Talk with the interview subject about the article or book you’ve read and get his or her opinion on it.

Write up the interview as an essay in itself. (We will discuss in class how to do this.)

(4) Develop an essay in which you put your two sources—the article and the interview—into dialogue with each other and with your own thoughts in order to “go under” your issue and explain it more fully.

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<th>Interview due:</th>
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<td>Peer Review Draft Due:</td>
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<td>Final Draft Due:</td>
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Length: 5-6 pages

Papers are due at the beginning of class. Papers turned in on the due date but after the class period will lose one-half letter grade; papers turned in after the due date will have a letter grade deducted, one grade per day late.
Writing as a Public Citizen: Persuading Others to Take Action
Amy Muse

For your final project you get the opportunity to make your writing matter outside of the classroom. You will take the research you conducted for Essay 3—the discoveries you made and conclusions you came to—and take it public by using it to support an argument for a public audience. This project does not have to be a formal essay; it can take the form of a public education campaign (perhaps a class you teach), pamphlet, letter to an editor or congressperson or CEO or some other responsible party, Web page or substantial response to someone else’s Web page, story for local media such as the Minnesota Daily or one of the neighborhood papers, speech, anthology of stories or histories or interviews, documentary or fictional film, play, and so on. (The Scott, Foresman Handbook has some other suggestions.) All of these various forms have their own conventions for argumentation and documentation of sources; make sure to look at some models and learn the proper conventions.

Your audience is a critical factor. Who will need to hear about or be educated on the discoveries you’ve made? Who will be affected? Who can do something to solve your problem? These are examples of questions to ask yourself in determining the target audience for this project.

Although these projects do not have to be primarily textual, they all will have a textual element. All projects need to be accompanied by a 2-3 page paper in which you clearly explain your vision and argument—what you were trying to accomplish with the project, why you made the choices you did. The audience for that 2-3 page paper is our class; it is not intended to be shown to your project audience or to be presented publicly along with your project.

On Wednesday, May 3, everyone will present and explain their projects to the class.

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Topic Proposal Due: 
First Draft Due: 
Peer Review Draft Due: 
Final Draft Due: 

Papers are due at the beginning of class. Papers turned in on the due date but after the class period will lose one-half letter grade; papers turned in after the due date will have a letter grade deducted, one grade per day late.
Social Action and Reflection
Tim Gustafson
University of Minnesota

Consult your journal and your notes, and use them to write a reflection on your service learning experience this semester. You may choose from the following options:

A) If your service learning experience was primarily positive, write a document detailing the positives of your experience (e.g., for you, for the people the organization serves, for the organization). But first decide on your more specific purpose and audience. For instance, if you tutored students at an elementary school, you might decide to write an editorial feature for a newspaper (a neighborhood newspaper, *StarTribune*, *Minnesota Daily*) to let the readers of that paper see what the volunteer experience involved, how it functioned as a learning experience, and to encourage more people to volunteer.

B) If your service learning experience was primarily negative, write a text which documents the problems involved, and which makes helpful suggestions for how to improve things for future volunteers. This will most likely take the form of a letter to the person who supervised you (or who was supposed to be supervising you). You should also consider me and people at the Career and Community Learning Center as part of the audience (that is, they and I would receive a “cc” or “carbon copy” of the letter) so that we are aware of the difficulties you encountered and the suggestions you have made.
Reflection and Synthesis
Amy Muse
To conclude our semester together, you will write an essay that reflects upon and synthesizes what you’ve learned this semester from our in-class work and from community work. You will take your service learning experiences and put them into conversation with the theoretical and practical texts we’ve read.
For instance, you might explore what questions have been raised for you, what issues have challenged you, what words or actions have inspired you.
- What commonalities and/or contradictions do you find between text and lived experience?
- What has affected you as a writer, student, citizen, or human being?
- What have you learned about what is important to learn in college? In life?
There is no one particular form or content for this essay. The requirements are that it is to be reflective and personal while analytical, and it is to engage specific instances in your community work and in at least two of the texts we’ve read. The audience is our class community.
How to set up assignment sequences

The preceding syllabi and assignment sheets give some sense of sequence of assignments. The most important thing for you to remember is to clarify the sequence for yourself and make it fit your learning objectives. Then you can explain the sequence to your students, on your syllabus, on each successive assignment sheet, or both.

Here are three suggestions for assignment sequences you might use with *Composing a Civic Life*:

**Working from community to community.** For this sequence you could choose several communities for your syllabus and match assignments to the type of writing that would fit with that community. For instance, both Chapter One and Chapter Six lend themselves to a Developing Definitions or Explaining a Concept assignment. Chapter Seven, on the family, and Chapter Eleven, on faith, might be especially appropriate for personal narratives. Chapters Nine and Ten, on globalization and the environment, are especially suited to research papers. However, all the communities’ chapters can be used for all kinds of assignments.

**Working from private to public.** This sequence begins with private, expressive writing, and moves over the course of the term to public, communicative writing. For instance, your early assignments might be journal entries and a personal narrative. The focus might be on helping students try out their voices in a safe environment. Later you could add a critical analysis of reading, then a research assignment that gets students to move from private library research to more public field research. Finally, they could communicate their research discoveries in an article format, or compose activist writing that would communicate with a wider audience outside the classroom.

**Working from public to private.** This sequence begins with public, communicative writing, and moves over the course of the term to private, expressive writing. For instance, your early assignments might be letters to the editor in response to a currently relevant issue, media analyses, or critical responses to readings. Later you can have students move their
thoughts inward to reflect upon their own views. You might have them keep a journal that progressively pushes them to explore their thoughts. The final assignment might be a personal narrative or a synthesis essay that builds upon their experience over the term.
PART III. Teaching Chapters 6-12: Inquiry and Action in Our Communities

Why we organized around communities
We chose to group the readings in *Composing a Civic Life* in communities, rather than to organize them by particular themes, because we experience civic life as being lived out in various communities. Readers of the book are encouraged to view themselves as public citizens, members of a number of communities, as well as private individuals. Each community that we belong to has its own standards for rigorous and ethical communication, and we need to learn those standards if we want to participate in them effectively.

We wanted to include a wide range of communities because citizens view themselves and their actions from many perspectives, and, importantly, some of those perspectives will overlap and conflict, which will cause us to have to make decisions about which community to support. The communities we chose include the ones familiar to many textbooks, such as the family and the college campus. We also include communities that are deeply important to our students but are rarely covered in textbooks in quite the way we’ve approached them. For instance, we emphasize building a sense of relationship with the planet rather than just reading about environmentalism; and we emphasize exploring the faith communities that sustain people, rather than reading about religions or religious debates.

The set of readings in each community chapter offers a range of voices and perspectives on various aspects of that community.

Why we chose real-life case studies
Each community chapter ends with a case study that raises an issue that is important to that community. What is more, the case studies are ones that have raised controversy or even threatened to tear the community apart. Our intention was for the case study to serve as a way to test the community’s coherence.
We chose real-life case studies rather than creating imaginary ones because we have found that students get more involved when they realize that the situation we’re studying currently is affecting or did affect real people. The specific details of a real-life case are always more unusual and complicated than hypothetical cases. The case study works even more effectively when the situation is still current and students can get involved in it.

In order to participate rigorously and intelligently in solving problems within communities, we need to have information on which to build our opinions. Thus, each case study opens with a couple of readings that ground us in the particulars of the situation. We then provide argumentative works, including editorials, academic articles, government documents, letters to the editor, and cartoons as well as literature that model the way community concerns get framed into social issues. Students are invited to articulate their own views in relation to the public conversations already taking place.

The case studies are focused either on issues that students tend to be concerned about and are discussing presently, such as the effects of popular culture on behavior, school violence, the role of sports in higher education, and the communities we build through the Web; or ones they will soon be facing, such as the United States’s role in globalization, and the kinds of families they want to create. To provide perspective, we have also included an historical case study on the role of faith communities, especially the black church, in the Civil Rights movement.

One unique aspect to the book is Chapter Ten’s case study, on measuring our individual impact on the environment, which builds entirely on students’ own inquiry and action. Each classroom, each group of students, will design their own case study. We encourage you to have your students publish their results on our Companion Website.

In the next section we explain why we chose each community for this book, provide overviews of the readings in each chapter, and suggest assignments and combinations of readings both within the chapter and
across chapters. You will also find many additional suggestions for discussion topics, research experiments and papers, and social action projects in the Questions for Inquiry and Action that follow every reading and every case study in the book.

**Chapter Six: Negotiating Community: Living a Civic Life**

Before immersing students in specific communities, we wanted to begin this part of the book with a chapter that examined the idea of community itself. Definitions are an essential starting point for discussions, we emphasize, because:

- Nearly everywhere you look, on the left, right, and center, politicians are advocating the idea of more “community,” but few of them actually detail exactly what they mean by community.
- We need to define, individually and collectively, what we actually want in a community. Community may not necessarily always mean physical closeness, small town, consensus, etc.
- A lot of unethical, even evil, things are allowed to exist unquestioned and unchallenged because they go under the name of community.

The readings in this chapter urge us to question and define community as well as celebrate it. Robert Frost’s “Mending Wall” suggests a dialog about the nature of community through two neighbors rebuilding the wall that separates them. Carol Bly’s “Enemy Evenings” talks candidly about how to improve the quality of intellectual life in often-stifling small towns. Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience” urges nonconformity in the face of collective, unthinking evil, as does Ursula Le Guin’s “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas.” The Stop and Think box on Public Art memorializes the former glory of a poor but rebuilding urban neighborhood through a community-revitalization project.

The variety of genres can be useful here, as Frost’s poem and Le Guin’s short story offer fictional takes on community, while Bly offers a detailed and personal proposal and Thoreau a general manifesto.
The case study on the Columbine shootings has been one of the most powerful we’ve taught over the last three years, since nearly all of our students were in high school in 1999 and were affected by it personally. We imagine the event will remain powerful for a few more years, until the students arriving at college were too young in 1999 for it to have made such an immediate impact. Our chief aim in compiling the readings was getting a range of perspectives and genres. There is a newspaper story and editorials right after the event, personal comments from a former Columbine student, critical analyses from a socialist Website and the zine *Hip Mama*, and a Congressional address by the father of one of the shooting victims. To help you teach this case study and chapter readings, we offer a few suggestions:

- The Getting Started survey asks students to assess their own neighborhoods, but you can use it to assess your shared campus community. What kind of community do you have on campus? What kind of neighborhood does your campus border? Is there much interaction between the campus and the surrounding community? Why or why not?
- Test the definitions of community that are proffered in these readings with any one of the community chapters’ readings. How have people’s definitions of community shaped the way they see the situation?
- This chapter was only one place where we could have placed a case study of the Columbine shootings. For instance, if you read this case study in the family chapter, or the chapters on school or faith communities, or even the chapters on global, planetary, or virtual communities, how would it make you see the shootings and their aftermath differently? This can be an especially useful assignment in conjunction with Chapter Three. Discuss ways to set up a research project. Emphasize that the way you frame an issue will determine how you research it and ultimately what you discover about it.
- Set up a unit on intersections of race, ethnicity, and community. How is community defined within different ethnic communities? Are nonwhite or non-American communities denied some of the
freedoms of community assumed by white American communities? Read some of the following in conversation with Chapter Six’s readings:
Fatima Mernissi “Moonlit Nights”
Benjamin Barber, “Jihad vs. McWorld”
Betita Martinez, “Where was the Color in Seattle?”
Regina Austin and Michael Schill, “Activists of Color”
Ralph Ellison, “Prologue” to Invisible Man
James McBride, “Black Power”

Chapter Seven: The Family as Community

We decided to place the family community early in the book because we know how important it is to us and our students. Family grounds us in so many ways, profoundly affecting our relationships in other communities. Here are just a few examples:

- Students usually develop their earliest environmental ethic through family activities like hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, leaf and insect collecting, astronomy, and so on.
- Children develop, through family life, the attitudes and skills they will need to draw on to relate to a larger world. Will they trust other people? Will they respond aggressively to aggression? Will they be able to make and maintain friendships in school?
- Students inculcate many of their spiritual and political values from their parents. In college, as they are exposed to a great variety of beliefs and ideas, they may begin to question those beliefs and values.
- Parents often seek in their children some confirmation of their own self-worth. Consequently, many students feel pressured to do well in college.

Of course, as Mary Pipher and William Bennett remind us, the nature of family in American society is changing. The fact that they can interpret these changes differently suggests that family itself can be seen through different ideological frameworks. The Scheibner family described in
Margaret Talbot’s “A Mighty Fortress” shows how values and beliefs shape the nature of family life and to what extent the family community intersects with other communities. Similarly, James McBride’s “Black Power” shows how his ideas about his racially mixed family were affected by the radical, racial politics of the 1960s. In each example, we see family itself responding to outside pressures, even as the family members try to make the family a bulwark against those pressures. Finally, Fatima Mernissi’s “Moonlit Nights of Laughter” describes a family different from what many American students are used to; the fact that we can appreciate the mother’s struggles to balance responsibilities to herself and to others suggests some common functions of the family that make the families of many different cultures comprehensible to one another.

This chapter models a number of different genres that students will appreciate. The photographs of Mark Seliger and Jeff Riedel teach us the power and richness of visual images. Students might compare the stories these photographs tell with Talbot’s investigative journalism and Mernissi’s and McBride’s personal reminiscences. Bennett’s editorial from Newsweek and a chapter from Pipher’s book The Shelter of Each Other: Rebuilding Our Families are part of the same conversation even though the genre each is writing within puts different pressures on the writers in what they can cover, how extensively, and in what style.

The case study might seem dated, covering Quayle’s 1992 anti-Murphy Brown speech, yet the term family values continues to resonate, expanding ever wider in meaning as new groups appropriate the term to express their own values and beliefs. The case study models so well the shifts that occur in public conversations about issues like the changing American family. To help you in teaching the case study and the chapter readings, we’ve suggested a few exercises and sequences of readings that have worked well for us:

- Read Quayle’s speech and Tony Earley’s “Somehow Form a Family” in Chapter Twelve. Discuss how TV both models what American families should look like and undermines social mores about the family.
• Research what is publicly known about the family life of Klebold, Harris, and other high school students who assaulted other citizens. Is there sufficient evidence to blame the parents of these kids? Would stronger family values in the culture, as well as in the families, help address this problem?

• Read Chapter Seven in conjunction with Chapter Three. Since students all have access to families, they can ask a variety of research questions about the family and practice several different research methods.

• Read Chapter Seven in conjunction with Chapter Ten. Family values are easy to promote because we see the people to whom we are responsible almost every day. Can environmentalists, seeking to promote a stronger environmental ethic, make nature as real for citizens as family? How?

Chapter Eight: The Higher Education Community

The higher education community is probably the most real for students since they are putting so much of their time and themselves into it. Even so, they, and we too, often view it simplistically, seeing it solely as a training period for professional careers, or, as a four-year holiday, a time to amass memories of parties, sex, and high jinks that will carry us through the rest of our dull lives. What these simple views miss is the complexity of this community and the challenges it poses to other communities. Here are a few examples:

- Many students are leaving their family for the first time. They must adjust to new freedoms and responsibilities, including the tremendous burden of paying for school.

- Students are learning about issues and subjects that compel them to look beyond their own pleasures and concerns.

- Many of students’ ideas about how they should live will be questioned. They will have to learn how to act with uncertainty without falling into cynicism.

- Many students will have to reconcile their spiritual beliefs with the systems of thought that underlie academic knowledge.
The readings in this chapter try to give to these concerns a wider context, so students can learn to see their experiences as part of larger social trends or rituals. Arthur Levine and Jeanette S. Cureton in “Collegiate Life: An Obituary” show that the nature of higher education is changing, responding to historical, social, and technological pressures. At the same time, many of the ideas in Roger H. Garrison’s “Why Am I in College?” (1959) still apply today. The transformations Garrison concentrates on occur within the intellectual and emotional capacity of the student; part of the ritual of college is to learn new ways of seeing the world, but how they relate to those new opportunities for inquiry and action depends on us all. Peter Sacks and bell hooks reveal to students that professors come into higher education with their own expectations, concerns, and personalities. The interaction of teachers and students is always an imperfect, complex exchange.

In addition to different ideas about the nature and purpose of higher education, students will encounter different genres. The University of Minnesota student honor pledge in the case study offers a statement of beliefs that members are asked to put into action. The letters to the editor following George Dohrmann’s article on the U of M basketball scandal and the advertisement from the Rutgers 1000 Alumni Council asking Rutgers University to withdraw from college athletics both show people already acting on their beliefs. Similarly, bell hooks’s “Engaged Pedagogy” and Peter Sacks’s “The Sandbox Experiment” while modeling reflective narratives recount what happened when these two professors inquired into the nature of higher education by setting up their own experiments; their essays become new opportunities for readers to set up their own projects.

The case study, College Athletics vs. Academics: The University of Minnesota’s Men’s Basketball Scandal, is significant because it raises questions that preoccupy members of higher education. What are the priorities of educators when it comes to sports, to academic cheating, to community responsibility, and to equal opportunities for all members? As
you explore this question and many others raised by these readings, you might include the following activities and readings:

- Read Murray Sperber’s “Cheating” and assess the extent to which students in your college cheat. Then, discuss how academic dishonesty should be dealt with. Will an honor pledge like the one given to U of M students help?
- Combine the Getting Started activity with a paper assignment. Students tell a story about some difficulty they experienced adapting to college. They research how to fix or address the difficulty; then they write a step-by-step guide for dealing with the difficulty. These essays can be bound together into a Freshman Survival Guide. (See the Twenty Five Things Your Tour Guide Never Told You Classroom Book Project on page 43.)
- Combine the Getting Started activity with a service-learning project. Students seek out opportunities to get involved in their higher education community.
- Students might read Chapters Seven and Eight simultaneously, exploring how the values of higher education communities relate to their own family’s values.
- Students might read Chapters Six and Eight together, seeking service learning opportunities in the local community. How does the college fit into its surroundings? Is it part of the local community?
Chapter Nine: Citizens of the World: The Global Community

Chapter One’s focus is on American citizenship and civic community, so we did not want another community chapter solely on our own national community. At the same time, we did not want a global community chapter that excluded the United States, since far too often “global” and “American” communities are discussed as if they are separate rather than inextricably bound together. The global community is essential to study because:

- Students who graduate from institutions of higher education must be able to see from a global perspective. We must educate citizens of the world who realize their personal choices make an impact on other people’s personal choices (or lack thereof) worldwide.
- International students are more of a presence on most of our campuses, and many more students are taking advantage of study abroad programs, and thus have a greater interest in international perspectives in all of their courses.
- The September 11th attacks revealed starkly that we need to become much more broadly informed and deeply knowledgeable about how we act in the world and how we are viewed by others.
- The current corporate scandals expose how seemingly private business practices have wide-ranging public consequences, and re-open related discussions about the role of corporations and corporate citizenship worldwide.

The readings in this chapter provide often richly complex arguments. Ngugi wa Thiongo critiques the domination of English as the language of education in Kenya, while James L. Watson shows a surprising look at the ways McDonald’s has improved communities at the same time it has delivered the less-happy consequences of globalization. Benjamin Barber’s now-classic “Jihad vs. McWorld” is especially pertinent for understanding currently opposing worldviews. Slavenka Drakulic’s “On Bad Teeth” gives us a perspective from Eastern Europe, with Drakulic comparing American dental care with that of Communist Yugoslavia.
While Drakulic’s essay is funny and accessible journalism, Ngugi, Watson, and Barber provide good examples for engaging academic articles; all include precise details and excellent research woven into an interesting narrative.

The case study on the WTO was chosen because the first protest in 1999 saw a record number of students involved, with often creative responses. The texts in the case study model a number of ways to become informed and take action, from pamphlets to editorials to cartoons. Here are some ways you might teach this chapter and case study in conjunction with other parts of the book:

- What kind of role should business corporations play in the larger world? How much should they be regulated? Read Watson, Barber, and Friedman. What does “corporate citizenship” mean?
- Develop a unit on student activism and let students experience how they can make a difference. For inspiration and ideas, read the works of faculty researchers Austin and Schill in Chapter Ten, student researchers Mulholland and Martin in Chapter Twelve, the community art project “You Belong Here!” in Chapter Six, and the purpose statement of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Chapter Twelve.
- How much does English literacy impact the way we interpret nearly everything? Along with Ngugi’s “Decolonising the Mind,” read Yezierska’s “America and I” and the INS exam in Chapter One, and Holly Van de Venter’s research paper and letter in Chapter Five. How much is English-only education helpful and harmful? What is the effect of an English-dominated Internet, English-dominated world commerce, etc.?

Chapter Ten: Citizens of the Earth: The Planetary Community

We included this chapter because we have often found students to be environmentally aware and interested in having a positive impact on the environment. Indeed, there are many writing courses focused solely on the environment. However, we haven’t always seen this subject explored in a
very complex way that takes into account the difficult decisions about priorities. For instance:

- How we imagine the world is how we live in it, and how we treat everything and everyone else in it. This means we need to exercise our imagination and develop our capacity for empathy so that we can take notice of what others need as well as what we need.
- Preserving the environment does not just mean saving the whales or the Amazonian rainforest. We often like to ignore other human beings and just focus on saving the earth. But people live in the earth right now. Environmental decisions and actions affect our neighbors, other humans, and ourselves.
- How can humans learn to live as part of nature, yet continue developing our civilization? Whose needs should take priority, when and where? These questions will only become more urgent.

The opening reading by David Orr leaves us with striking images so we can understand the urgency of the situation. Haines’s “Snow” reflects on ways we read a landscape like a book. Austin and Schill remind us of the social environments we harm when we poison natural environments, and also how environmentalists will often overlook the pressing needs of low-income communities and put a priority on saving nonhuman plants or animals. Quinn’s *Ishmael* parable, which has been popular with book clubs and spawned fan page communities on the Web, offers a fascinating basis for discussion of the purpose of human beings in relation to their environment, while Rukeyser’s “St. Roach” and Clare’s “The Badger” ask us to put ourselves in the place of their eponymous creatures.

The genres in this chapter are designed to offer good ways of exercising moral imagination. Orr presents a tight, well-structured argument organized around an analogy of global warming to slavery. Haines provides meditative participant observation and Austin and Schill a forceful argument. The excerpts from Quinn’s novel and the poems from Rukeyser and Clare all offer perspectives on humans from nonhumans: from a gorilla, a cockroach, and a badger, respectively.
The case study is a do-it-yourselfer. If you teach it with parts of Chapters Three and Four, students will be able to immediately apply their research and argumentation methods. It is a perfect example for problem-based learning, would be an easy and obvious choice for small group or individual research projects, and could be the largest and most complex assignment of your semester. Since all of the students will be working on the same general experiment, you can use this assignment to evaluate the different textual resources they find, the different style of the experiments they set up, and the substance of the different results they get from those experiments. If you have students present their projects to one another, everyone will be able to see clearly and objectively which projects have more useful resources, more reliable sources, more substantial findings. (You may find this easier when it comes time for grading, as well, since the students will have seen a more objective display of quality.) The readings in Chapter Ten are a good foundation for the case study. In addition, other ideas for this chapter include:

- Use the Getting Started exercise to discuss the role of imagination in empathizing with others, seeing points of view, and solving problems. Read it with *Ishmael*, “St. Roach” and “The Badger,” “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” in Chapter Six, the Prologue to *Invisible Man* in Chapter One, and the excerpt from *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail* in Chapter Three.
- How does developing the case study make you examine yourself and your own lifestyle and habits? Read the excerpts from *Walden* in Chapter Three and Benjamin Franklin’s self-improvement scheme in his Autobiography in Chapter One. How did Thoreau and Franklin develop self-improvement plans for themselves? How could you develop one for yourself?
- Read Chapters Nine and Ten together. How are issues of globalization and global community bound up with issues of planetary community and the natural environment? Over what do we have the greatest conflicts? Why?
- Read Chapters Ten and Eleven together. How does our view of God, creation, religion, or the soul affect the way we view and
treat the earth and its creatures? And, in turn, how does our view of the earth affect the way we imagine God, creation, religion, and our own souls?

Chapter Eleven: Communities of Faith

Our experience has been that many of our students find their faith communities to be their most important and active communities outside of their families—and often in contrast to their families. This does not just include religious fundamentalists. We have found, however, that instructors often shy away from issues of faith in their courses for fear of opening up discussions they themselves are uncomfortable with, since the discussions are not necessarily on rational subjects. Indeed, when this book was under review, the instructors reviewing it had strongly opposing points of view on whether this chapter should even be included. But we think including it is important because:

- Citizens, whether elected officials or voters, often struggle between holding a private, personal, often idiosyncratic and beyond rational faith, and needing to act for the sake of a diverse public that demands rationality and equity.
- Most of the fiercest, most deeply entrenched disputes in the current world and in the history of the world have stemmed from religious differences bound up with political differences.
- The power of communities of faith—as opposed to religious systems—is still not very well understood and explored.
- Students of college age are often spiritual seekers but aren’t given much of an understanding intellectual arena in which to explore their ideas through writing and open discussion.

Stephen Carter’s “Culture of Disbelief” can be put into debate with Wendy Kaminer’s “The Last Taboo: Why America Needs Atheism,” as Kaminer critiques Carter and both cogently argue opposing views of the place of religion in the public sphere and government. Anne Lamott’s “Why I Make Sam Go to Church” is a funny and sweet personal narrative that evokes the warmth and caring that draws people to faith communities.
Tom Beaudoin’s “Experience is Key” is a hip look at Gen X desire for direct experience in religion that is mostly gotten through rock music and tattoos. Katherine Rosman’s “Mormon Family Values” details the story of one family’s struggle with their LDS church and their gay son.

All of these readings are prose but stylistically can be useful for discussions of narrative voice and argument. Carter is earnest in contrast to Kaminer who is sharply witty and sarcastic. Lamott is intimate and disarmingly funny about her faith just when she might seem to come on too strong. Beaudoin’s piece is simultaneously cool and intellectually rigorous. Rosman’s journalism weaves together cultural analysis and the Hardy family’s own account of their experiences.

The case study on the role of faith communities in the civil rights movement is intended to give some historical background and context for students who may have heard quite a bit in general but really don’t know much in detail about the era and the movement. The concentration in this case study is on the activism and the methods people used to effect change. We refer students to an online version of King’s classic “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” through the use of a Writing Style box, but print a powerful but lesser-known sermon from Holt Street Baptist Church. We also include Bernice Johnson Reagon’s insights on the role of music in the movement, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee’s statement of purpose. Robert Franklin’s academic analysis provides an excellent introduction with critical and historical perspective.

Here are some suggestions for ways to teach the chapter readings and the case study:

- Both Lamott and Rosman can be read with the family as community or family values readings in Chapter Seven. Lamott, a single mother, finds in her church community a surrogate family with lots of grandparents for her son. Rosman describes the values of the Hardy family that help them support their son while their church, which they also love, refuses to accept him.
Use the case study to begin a discussion on race, religion, and social justice. Incorporate Austin and Schill’s “Activists of Color” in Chapter Ten and Betita Martinez’s “Where was the color in Seattle?” in Chapter Nine as well as the Black Panthers’ Ten Point Plan in Chapter Four and Ellison’s Prologue to *Invisible Man* in Chapter One. Research the role of the black church in social justice activism. Examine the range of ways of expressing rage, mourning, pain, and then of taking action, including hymn singing, jazz and blues, sermons, and proclamations and letters.

What is the role of faith in current political discussions? For instance, over the marriage of homosexual people (see Bennett in Chapter Seven); or over reproductive rights, sex education, and abortion; or over euthanasia and capital punishment. (Look up the work of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, for example.)

What roles have the various faith communities been playing in the current anti-war movement? How do the communities see their faith contributing to their political views and activism?

**Chapter Twelve: Virtual Communities**

We chose to make virtual communities the final chapter for two reasons. First, it represents the most recent community; the technologies that are its subject and means of communication are twentieth-century developments. Radio debuted in the early twentieth century, and the television followed in the 1930s and 40s. Cell phone technology was introduced in 1947, with the first commercial telephone systems starting in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The communication protocol that led to the Internet was introduced in 1980, new innovations quickly expanding the Internet’s possibilities. We hope that you use some of these technologies, especially our Website, to enrich your experience with *CCL*.

We also left virtual communities until the end because the technological innovations that have made these communities possible have profoundly affected all the other communities.
Local communities might suffer if residents give their business, their time, and their energies to the Internet, yet some communities are using the Internet to wire residents, giving them unprecedented access to each other and to public services.

Families can stay in touch more regularly, even as technologies like television threaten the quality of their interaction.

TV evangelists and virtual churches offer alternatives to traditional churches, even as e-mail and cell phones help spiritual leaders keep in touch with their congregations.

Environmental groups can use images and video to inspire people to get involved in their causes, and Internet Websites empower their ability to organize rallies and solicit financial support.

Political candidates can access more voters through the Internet. Citizens can follow bills in Congress, contact civil and business leaders more quickly, and examine alternative viewpoints on current events by accessing international news sources.

How we handle these challenges and opportunities says much about our vision of the place technology should play in our lives.

Of course, people do not always agree on technology’s proper place. The readings in this chapter reflect those disagreements. Some writers like Bonnie Nardi and Vicki O’Day support a critical use of technology. Others like Jeff Dietrich and the participants of two Megatechnology conferences, who created the “78 Reasonable Questions to Ask About Any Technology,” suggest we use critical thinking to limit our use of technology. Tony Earley and Jake Mulholland and Adrienne Martin use their writing to exercise critical thinking, exploring through their writing the influence one specific technology, television, has had on their lives.

In addition to representing a variety of opinions on technology, the readings in Chapter Twelve model a variety of different genres. Earley wrote a short story, The Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy wrote a song, and David Bell wrote a methodical research paper aimed at academic communities. These different genres show how diverse and widespread conversations on technology have become.
The case study ties CCL back to Chapter One by encouraging students to explore how the Internet can improve the quality of citizenship in the United States. Specifically, the case study asks the question “Does the Internet Promote Democracy?” Jon Katz’s essay, published on Wired in 1997, expresses optimism about the possibilities of political involvement via the Web. Simon Davies and Ian Angell, on the other hand, express grave doubts about citizens’ capacity to use this new technology wisely. Cass Sunstein then frames the issue differently, suggesting that, instead of encouraging oppression by the masses, the Internet will encourage people to hook up with only those sites and people who already agree with them. Limiting our exposure to different viewpoints may discourage critical thinking and active inquiry.

This chapter might be taught in a variety of ways. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Students could read Nardi and O’Day, and then conduct an ethnographic study of how the students use technology in a particular local community. They could then read Dietrich and the 78 reasonable questions to critically assess their technology use.
- Students could listen to “Television: The Drug of the Nation,” discuss the group’s lyrics, and then keep a record of their television viewing habits. Next, they could read Earley and Mulholland and Martin. The readings should encourage the students to go back over this list of observations and assess the wisdom of their viewing habits.
- Students could read David Bell first and then the case study. They could write a bibliographic essay summarizing where conversations on direct democracy are currently being discussed.
- Students could start with Nardi and O’Day to begin a classroom conversation on framing arguments. Students could then read the direct democracy case study and practice different ways they might frame their arguments about technology. The “78 questions” might help them too, since questions can encourage us to frame an argument in different ways.
The chapter and case study lack an international dimension that students could develop. Have them research international Websites, especially those that work to promote democracy. How has the Internet affected Eastern Europe, for instance, or Middle Eastern or African countries, in providing democratic space for political discussion and activism?
PART IV. Where To Find Resources for Further Inquiry and Action

Throughout the book we refer to a number of resources. You can find them listed in the Bibliography. Here we include some additional resources that we’ve found useful for thinking about writing and about communities.

Books and articles on citizenship, civic life, American history and culture, and the teaching of writing:


Weiss, Michael. *The Clustered World: How We Live, What We Buy, and


Websites:
Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/>
Democratic National Committee: <http://www.democrats.org/>
Republican National Committee: <http://www.rnc.org/>
Green Party: <http://www.greenparty.org/>
Libertarian Party: <http://www.lp.org/>
Public Citizen: <http://www.citizen.org/>
Democracy Now! <http://www.democracynow.org/>
Freedom Forum: <http://www.freedomforum.org/>
Beliefnet religious and spiritual e-community: <beliefnet.com>
Wind: Journal of Writing and Community: <www.wind.wind.org>
Globalvision New Media’s Media Channel: <http://mediachannel.org>
Independent Media Center: <http://www.indymedia.org/>
Anti-immigration site Project USA: <http://www.projectusa.org/>
Action Network Environmental Defense: <http://actionnetwork.org/>
Third Wave Foundation: <http://www.thirdwavefoundation.org/>
Feminist Majority Foundation Online: <http://www.feminist.org/>
HotWired magazine archives: <http://hotwired.lycos.com/frontdoor/why.html/>
SportsJones substantive sports analysis: <http://www.sportsjones.com/>