

ENGL 105: Writing at the Research University
Fall 2022 with Paul Blom

Additional Learning Outcomes for Feeders and Unit Projects

Understand rhetorical knowledge through genre awareness.

Each unit places you in a specific rhetorical situation in which you must be mindful of your genre, audience, role, and purpose. Through each unit project, you will be exposed to a variety of genres common in the specific discipline represented by that unit (natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities). Exposure to these genres prepares you for future courses or professional work in each discipline while also allowing you to practice the skill of navigating the specific needs or challenges of any genre, discipline, or field. As you practice placing yourself in a variety of rhetorical contexts, you will become more adept at recognizing, analyzing, and responding to new contexts or roles in the future (in your writing, your reading, and your research). Providing feedback to your peers will help you better reflect on your own rhetorical situation as well. Additionally, at least one unit will integrate an oral communication component while at least one unit will integrate a digital literacy component, providing new challenges in terms of not just genre but also modality and medium for communicating your ideas, challenges that will further enhance your skills.

Apply critical thinking skills.

Each unit will force you to think critically as you consider and choose topics, conduct and summarize research, and interrogate your project plan for flaws or weaknesses. Finally, you will have to think critically as you synthesize your two feeder assignments into your unit project. What's worth including or omitting? What new sections need to be added? Those sections themselves will require critical thinking as you compose them. Critical thinking improves exponentially. The more you exercise those critical thinking muscles, the stronger they become, shaping you into a careful interrogator of the texts, media, situations, and world around you, both in the classroom and beyond.

Approach composition as a process.

The final product of the unit is the unit project. The feeder assignments are designed to break the overall composition process of the unit project into manageable sections. Each feeder will undergo a process of sharing, feedback, and revision, and the same goes for the final unit project. Every aspect will require careful thought, planning, execution, reflection, and revision, forcing you to engage with the entire writing process both as a writer and as an interested reader providing feedback to your peers. This will ultimately improve your work on this unit, future units, and future writing projects in college and beyond, making you a more thoughtful and effective reader, writer, and communicator.

Identify and employ conventions.

As you engage with each genre involved in each unit, you will be forced to think about the needs and challenges within that genre, needs and challenges that have led to the development of specific conventions over time. Remember: the conventions of a particular discipline, field, or genre are not arbitrary; instead, they are organic results of the priorities, values, and goals of writers and researchers in that discipline or field. In order to write effectively and to offer useful feedback, you will have to become familiar with and adopt the conventions specific to each discipline and to each genre involved. Again, this isn't just

about learning new conventions and using them; this is about learning HOW to learn new conventions and learning HOW to use them. The goal is for you to be prepared, in the future, to familiarize yourself with any new set of conventions and to navigate and use them appropriately and effectively.

Additionally:

Reading and writing are recursive skills; practicing and improving one skill improves the other. Reading and responding to the work of your peers on each unit project will provide you with new perspectives or approaches on each particular project but should also allow you to improve on your future compositions, both in this class and beyond. As you think critically about the work of your peers, your critical thinking skills will improve, which ultimately improves your own writing. (Part of the writing process is reading/revising your own work!) Taking the role of an interested and invested reader responding to others' writing will enhance your own writing abilities as you begin to notice the ways in which your peers' work struggles and/or succeeds, thus enabling you to critique, revise, and improve your own work as well.