

English 101.41: College Composition Major Writing Assignments

Fall 2016
Bryan 324
MWF 13:10–14:00

Dr. Mike Edwards
mike.edwards@wsu.edu
Office Hours: Avery 341 MW 11AM–noon and by appointment

509 335 8818
Avery 341

Essay 1: A Comparative Analysis (1800 words minimum; audience: Dr. Edwards)

Essay 1 asks you to carefully evaluate and discuss the relative merits of the argumentative positions offered by Mark Edmundson and Paulo Freire in their essays, “On the Uses of a Liberal Education: As Lite Entertainment for Bored College Students,” and “The Banking Model of Education.” Both are about education, but work in different directions: they don’t argue against each other. Evaluate the relative merits of the arguments offered by Freire and Edmundson and offer your own assessment of the implications of that evaluation for how higher education should work for you. A good essay will discuss your own experience with education and compare and contrast that experience to what Edmundson and Freire have to say. You must engage both authors’ words, and you must talk about yourself: use forms of the word “I” in this essay. Your essay should have an MLA-formatted list of Works Cited that includes Edmundson and Freire, and parenthetical citations that point to that list. This is not an assignment to simply summarize, or to compare and contrast: I know quite well what both the authors say, and am more interested in what you do with them. Use Edmundson and Freire to tell me about your view of education. The primary criteria for evaluation, in addition to the English 101 portfolio criteria, are **description** and **analysis**.

Essay 2: A Rhetorical Response (2000 words minimum; audience: classmates)

Essay 2 requires you to extend a narrative argumentative response to the positions you described and analyzed in Essay 1, explicitly citing and narrating examples from your own experience in order to support your argument. Your argument must use narrative from your own experience to explicitly respond to the ideas expressed by either Victor Villanueva in “*Memoria* Is a Friend of Ours: On the Discourse of Color” or Megan Foss in “Love Letters.” Your argument must also engage one reading on a topic related to education: **challenges** (choose between two readings concerned with the effects of adversity on learning) or **technologies** (choose between two readings concerned with the effects of the Internet on learning). Your argumentative response must take a position on the uses and possible ideal forms or applications of some aspect of higher education and respectfully defend that position against those who might reasonably disagree with you. In order to do so, you should again draw from narrative examples from your own experience. You must also consider, cite, and carefully quote at least one reputable and authoritative source that you find on your own. Your evaluative findings about the nature and uses of higher education should lead you to a question for further research that you are willing to pursue and make more specific in Essay 3. Your use of Foss or Villanueva will help you to incorporate narrative into argument, and the topic you choose (**challenges** or **technologies**) will give you ways to frame your argument. Describing your own experience should help you support that argument. The primary criteria for evaluation, in addition to the English 101 portfolio criteria, are **summary** and **narration**.

Essay 3: A Documented Inquiry (2400 words minimum; audience: your academic field)

Essay 3 asks you to add to the source you found for Essay 2 and expand the research you did into a documented inquiry on an academic topic of interest to you. While it does not require you to make an argument, it does ask you to investigate the parameters of an academic debate, posing your research problem or question about the forms of higher education from Essay 2 as a starting point for querying why and how people in the academic field of specialization that you're focusing on talk about the research problem or question you've chosen. You should represent the differing positions and motivations fairly, and explicitly consider the validity and reliability of your sources and the ways in which they make their arguments. Your essay will include an introductory section that poses your research problems or questions; a research review that condenses, quotes, and paraphrases the various sources you find; a methods section that explains your criteria for comparing and evaluating the various arguments; a findings and analysis section that performs that comparison and evaluation; and a conclusion section that explains the results of your inquiry and possible implications for its relevance and directions for future research, including posing possibly unanswered questions. Your essay must include at least 2400 words and incorporate four academic sources in addition to what you used for Essays 1 and 2 (so a minimum of six sources total: at least one of the required readings from Essays 1 or 2, the source you found for Essay 2, and four new ones). This assignment may resemble the "research project" you're familiar with from other classes, but you are pursuing an investigation about different forms of knowledge, rather than regurgitating already-known facts. The primary criteria for evaluation, in addition to the English 101 portfolio criteria, are **evaluation** and **integration**.

Essay 4: A Metacognitive Reflection (1800 words minimum; audience: Writing Program)

For Essay 4, you will review and synthesize the end-of-assignment reflections you wrote for Essays 1–3 into a narrative assessing the progress you've made as a college-level writer over the course of the semester. You will use the statistical evidence you've gathered from Eli Review, 750 words, and Togg1 to help you make your evidence-based assessment. This essay will be a narrative (and it again must use the word "I") recapitulating, quoting, and evaluating the weaknesses and strengths you've demonstrated as a writer. It will be in the form of a cover letter for your portfolio addressed to the WSU Writing Program staff to help them assess how you've progressed, and so must demonstrate a level of self-awareness and *metacognition* (i.e., thinking carefully about your own writing and learning processes). The Writing Program values innovation and also values careful academic work with sources, so your Essay 4 can and should balance those two tendencies in a form that feels both creative and responsible: it must incorporate multiple media beyond text (possibly including but not limited to images, audio, typography, video, document design, and/or genre), and should reflect who you are as a writer. It must be at least 1800 words long and properly quote and cite feedback from your peers and Dr. Edwards, as well as your own Essays 1–3, and statistical data about how you've engaged with the work of the course. It must also explicitly evaluate and account for how well your portfolio aligns with the *English 101 Portfolio Outcomes* detailed in the syllabus and course materials. The primary criteria for evaluation, in addition to the English 101 portfolio criteria, are **synthesis** and **self-assessment**.