

Meghan Hurley
Professor Boyle
WRI 350
13 February 2019

Annotated Bibliography of College Works

1. “How to Write a Research Article like a Psychologist.” WRI 210: *Academic Research & Writing: Argumentation Across Disciplines*, Dr. Laura Aull: Fall, 2015.

The following WRI 210 assignment was a summative research paper that came as a conclusion to the learnings I developed in the course. In the guidelines, we were instructed to construct a text-based study of a writer and genre in a field which interests us, with the leading concept being “How to Write a ____ like a ____.” I chose to focus on the genre of psychology, as I had been enrolled in an introductory level psych course at the time that I found stimulating. Throughout the semester, I studied and interviewed experts of the psychology discourse community in attempts to hone in on exactly what distinguishes psychology writing from hard science genres as well as humanities courses.

WRI 210, and especially this assignment, acted as the bridge that allowed me to “pass through the portal” of understanding genre and discourse community concepts. Not only did I know very little about academic writing as a whole, but I was fully immersed in a new world of writing techniques that categorize different genres. I learned that writing about history and writing about molecular biology requires two completely different strategies--which can be tracked down to the frequency of different cohesive markers, for example. All semester, I was learning how to improve my own writing by simultaneously observing how experts across industries write. This class and particularly this assignment also piqued my interest in becoming an Interdisciplinary Writing Minor.

This was a large knowledge leap for me, as I had never been prompted to understand writing and meaning-making in this way. Confident in my ability to identify some of the key components of this genre with relevant research and findings to support my claims, I view this paper as a cognitive advancement in terms of writing to *understand* new concepts.

2. “How an Appliance Re-fabricated Society.” FYS 100: *Meet Me at the Fair*, Professor Dr. Ryan Shirey et. al: Spring, 2016.

This essay was an assignment for my first year seminar: “Meet Me at the Fair.” As we transitioned into the segment on science and technology, the prompt was to write a 4-5 page essay examining the ways in which a particular exhibit attempted to explain a scientific concept to the public. We were asked to analyze this advancement and its promise of the “world of tomorrow” to visitors with its display. The rubric of the essay revolved around the criteria argument, analysis, organization/ coherence, communication, style and tone, and mechanics. I chose to discuss the Westinghouse display of the electric dishwasher at the 1939 expo.

Reassessing the writing in this essay, it becomes apparent that I was a first-year student learning to navigate different disciplines. The course was taught by seven professors of very unrelated disciplines including english, history, education, dance, chemistry, neuroscience, and

music, with the English professor taking the lead. Our classes were taught by one or a few professors at a time and each of our papers were graded by a different pair. My grade for this paper was relatively low compared to others and I recall being frustrated as a freshman being asked to balance so many values. This paper happened to be graded by the English professor, who found my argumentation very weak and the chemistry professor, who saw my tone as out of place. Rereading the criteria for the assignment, I agree that my thesis was very weak in terms of argumentation. I wrote the paper as more of a narrative recap of the exhibit, as opposed to a well-formed argument discussing the science behind it.

In regards to the tone comment, I was quite taken aback when my diction choices affected my grade. However, this comment helped me to understand as a writer that I can still adjust my tone while remaining true to my authentic voice-- two things that I had not previously understood as independent. It was a challenge to balance the opposing writing values of professors from different discourse communities, but this assignment and this course opened my eyes to the very apparent nuances that define each genre.

3. "Literacy Narrative." WRI 341 *Writing Center Pedagogy*, Dr. Ryan Shirey: Spring, 2017.

The purpose of this text, prompted by my professor of Writing Center Pedagogy, was to get comfortable telling my writing story through the genre of a personal narrative. The guidelines were fairly loose beyond that. I chose to reflect on my literacy and journey with writing through a series of descriptive time-lapsed situations in which my perspective on writing changed-- either positively or negatively. This sophomore year writing reflects several layers of my development and understanding of interdisciplinary writing and the purposes it serves in my life:

Regarding the developmental rhetoric: Personal narrative prompts in college do not come all too often, even if you are a writing minor. I was quite caught up in the genre expectations of this assignment and decided to visit the writing center myself for peer assistance. I learned several elements of the personal narrative as I worked through the assignment: narratives are creative, personal, and *tell a story*. This was the component that I had missed. This assignment gave me new perspective on the efficacy of framing details and information in the context of a captivating, strategically organized story. My writing improved in both this genre and others as a result.

Regarding the contents: this was the first assignment where I was forced to think from a creative outside perspective about the journey I had taken to become literate in writing. Reflecting on my stance towards the subject throughout chronological milestones, I came to the conclusion that I was born a writer and have adapted those skills to several different discourse communities-- ranging from the free reign of Johns Hopkins Creative Writing to the confines of SAT and AP style brevity. This recognition resulted in boosted confidence both in my writing and tutoring abilities. In many regards, my writing portfolio will serve as a continuation of these personal reflections.

4. “Digging Holes to Undiscovered Territory.” ENV 301: *Topics in Environmental Studies*, Terry Tempest Williams: Spring, 2017.

This assignment was alternative in terms of what is typically read and written by environmentalists. In fact, visiting environmental activist Terry Tempest Williams was at her core an embodiment of alternative writing and its effects on social change. Williams has written several books advocating for sustainability, feminism, and conservation. Rather than using scientific data or logos to reason out the need for change, she has gained several accolades for her captivating memoirs and personal stories as they relate to her passions. In efforts to share this writing technique, our writing assignment for the week long class was to be working on a personal narrative. Our only guidelines were to “tell our story” and we worked to refine it each night of the week. After careful thought and time, I crafted my personal statement around the stifling concept of perfectionism, and how my personal values changed when I faced major adversity with my father’s cancer battle.

This paper serves as my first major realization that my story and experiences have power. I actually began this assignment by looking back at my Common App essay. The story I told when applying for colleges was similar but focused much more on my own personal and familial struggle through the same series of events. Throughout the week, Terry helped me to understand the greater meaning in this story as it relates to society and existentialism. As a result, my final product told the story with a stronger critique on the ideals held by society--that of grades, body image, intelligence, and perfection. Though the writing may not be perfect and all of the moving parts don’t exactly reflect my writing capabilities now, this assignment allowed me to find meaning in my purpose as a college writer.

5. “Students studying abroad witness Catalan revolution first hand.” Old Gold & Black, Fall, 2017.

Sophomore year I made tremendous strides in terms of writing for an audience upon my entry into Intro to Journalism, where I was prompted to write frequent news articles relating to the Wake Forest community. Junior fall, however, I witnessed something that dialed up the journalism discourse community within me beyond my time in the class. While studying abroad in Barcelona, I was fully engulfed in a political revolution. This was news that I didn’t force to create for a class assignment, but rather news that stunned me and required impeccable journalism to relay all the way back to Winston Salem. After contacting the Old Gold & Black and gaining approval for the front page, I now took on the challenge of telling this story in the context of the WFU community. To do so, I wrote the story in the scope of study abroad students, investigating how perspective can change dramatically based on surroundings.

Through each journalistic feat, I learned that press writing takes on an entirely different form and function compared to the academic and narrative writing that I had been more previously familiar with. This article, for example, gives attention to the most important and relevant information at the beginning, with supporting details decreasing in relevance thereafter. This piece also displays concision in its simplest form, adhering to the strict guidelines of the Associated Press Stylebook.

In addition to awareness of differing discourse community demands, this article reflects an authentic passion I have for using writing as an instrument of communication and narrative with my peers. My first instinct when I encountered this historical revolution was to preserve its value in the OGB, and my excitement to share the news is evident through the extensive reporting I did both in interviewing Spanish professors as well as Wake Forest students. Never before had I felt so deeply immersed in the genre of the OGB and the discourse community of student journalist. While there was certainly room for improvement and even further reporting, I can confidently say this was my most successful journalistic feat.

6. “Risk Memo.” FIN 231: *Introduction to Finance*, Professor Bill Marcum: Spring, 2018.

The genre of memo is one that is frequently practiced within the walls of the school of business. While I had done them before in classes like financial accounting, the following finance risk memo was one of the more difficult memos I had been assigned-- as I was required to perform a financial risk analysis of several portfolio options and use the memo as a means of explaining my recommendation. This was the first time I had also been given a sheet describing exactly the formal requirements and aim of a memorandum, which was much more detailed and strict than I had anticipated. My result was a concise, three-paragraph document with a specific header addressed to management, as I was theoretically the intern working at the investment fund.

This is likely one of my most terse, concise pieces of writing completed at Wake Forest. The sentence structure does not vary and the tone is very subdued. All of the arguments are based on an unbiased numerical analysis done in excel. The writing follows a consistent structure-- stating the purpose of the document at the top with each paragraph outlining the results of certain calculations followed by 1 or 2 sentences analyzing the meaning of those results. Though I wouldn't consider it some of my strongest writing, the memo reaches both its audience and intended purpose in less than 350 words. This type of writing is valued particularly in the finance sector but also across many different business functions. Although financial risk and portfolio analysis is not something I particularly desire to go into, this assignment was a helpful exercise in creating a statistical or data-driven argument that is powerful yet brief.

7. “Conversation Analysis.” ENG 390: *The Structure of English*, Dr. Laura Aull: Spring, 2018.

The Conversation Analysis was assigned in my Structure of English course, where we broke apart English into small phonemes, morphemes, words and sentences to better understand meaning-making. The assignment required that we record a conversation longer 30-45 minutes long with around four speakers or less. We were then to transcribe the entire conversation and subsequently mark up the dialogue for things like discourse markers, cohesive ties, and other rhetorical moves. The last part of the assignment was an analysis of the discourse that required a specific focus and a coherent argument. For my conversation, I recorded and analyzed a steak dinner conversation that took place between my cousin, sister, mother and myself. What I found was ultimately that external conditions of formality have less influence on the conversation style

of the participants. More influential is the dynamic of the relationship between participants and the age dynamic between those in the speech community.

This paper reflects my ability as a third-year college student to construct a sound argument based on textual evidence. I was first able to disprove the hypothesis that a formal restaurant would influence the conversation to be more filtered. Instead, speakers used many pragmatic markers and spoke minutes long about coffee (sleepiness remedy) because they had low energy. I then went on to conclude that the speakers' relationship (all relatives) influenced shorter narratives, several referents and implied meanings. Furthermore, I concluded that age played a major role, as I noted many turn-taking situations that were disrupted by the eldest (my mother) and very few contributions were made by the youngest cousin. The logic of my arguments plays out well in this analysis and I was proud of my writer's ability to use very small textual clues to construct meaning. Even more, it was interesting to look further into the dialectic structure and elements of a conversation as opposed to the more commonly studied text in school.

8. "Briefing #1." BEM 389: *Management Internship*, Professor Thad Lewallen: Summer, 2018.

This assignment was the first of six detailed briefings for my business internship course. Essentially, the class aimed to get us to think and reflect critically on our internship experiences as they relate to our interests, strengths, goals and aspirations. Every other week, I was assigned a briefing in which I would respond to certain questions as well as update the progress of my goals. My professor for this class stressed over and over the importance of formatting, something that had never before been emphasized throughout my education. As a result, I chose to use a very visual format for my briefing, with supporting images, charts, graphics, colors, bullets, and headings. The briefing opens with my first impressions and proceeds to talk about my expectations, project, goals, and initial concerns.

As supported by my professor's feedback, this document does a great job of breaking up information and organizing it into visual representations that are easier on the eye. Though the primary audience was my professor, another more ominous reader would be my future self--looking back on these briefings to assess my overall opinions of one of my first career-related work experiences. As the author, I needed to be creative with my display of information in order to keep the briefing relevant and interesting to read despite the amount of content. The main concern with this particular assignment is brevity. Irrespective of the subject matter, experts in business value streamlined thoughts. Though I used bullets, headings, subheadings and tables to summarize information, the "brief" still lasted around 6 full pages. This was something that I continued to improve upon throughout the summer while adhering to similar formatting.

This piece of writing serves as a real-life intersectionality between my professional career and my writing interests. I have always considered myself a creative mind and these briefings allowed me to express this facet of my individualism while still remaining professional.

9. “Wake Forest Women in Business Flyer.” BEM 318: *The Calloway Leadership Experience*, Dr. Holly Brower: Fall, 2018.

Last fall, I took a leadership course in which one of the major projects was to “leave a legacy” on Wake Forest. Because I am passionate about women’s rights and gender equality in the workplace, my aim was to create a group on campus that supported women in business initiatives. Though the idea was born in a classroom setting, it eventually became my passion for the semester. The writing assignments required for the project were intermittent reports detailing the progress we had made. The following flyer was not a writing assignment for the project, but rather a promotional marketing material that I made in order to captivate interest from underclassmen and explain the overall vision of the group. The flyer is one page double-sided, visual, graphic, and includes streamlined information to maintain the interest of the intended audience.

When my partner and I were in the exploratory and research phase of our project plan, our aim was to gather as much feedback as possible from our peers. This meant meeting new undergrad and graduate students, sharing our vision, and asking for their feedback. These constructive peer-to-peer engagements were most valuable in shaping the direction of the group. For example, one graduate business student looked at the flyer and asked, “So how formal do you want this to be? Because when you use language like ‘professional development’ and ‘networking’, that sounds a lot more formal than if you were to say, for example, ‘workshops’ and ‘relationship-building.’” After hearing comments like these, I became much more aware of the purpose of my promotional flyer. Sure, the goal was to explain the core tenets of the group, but I had yet to think about things such as formality, involvement and overall tone. As a business student interested in marketing and as a writer, this piece of writing allowed me to see the significance of writing down to word choice as it relates to marketing materials.

10. “The Culmination.” BEM 318: *The Calloway Leadership Experience*, Dr. Holly Brower: Fall, 2018.

Similar to my future writing portfolio, I was assigned a capstone project in my leadership course that would require a “culmination” of all of my learnings and reflections of myself as a leader. There were three main sections of the project with the first being an individual self-portrait of who I am as a leader. The second was an original leadership model and subsequent action plan that I would follow throughout my future career. Last, I was tasked with a summation of all of the major assignments, activities, readings, and activities from the semester as a sort of portfolio with my takeaways from each. Beyond requirements and suggestions for each of these three sections, my professor left the format and writing style very open-ended, as she was looking for a creative display of who we believe we are after completing the course.

At first, this writing assignment seemed very daunting. How would I synthesize everything I had learned? How would I use these learnings to define myself and my leader values? How would I do all of this in a unique way? Who was my true audience? After ruminating over questions like these, I decided that I wanted this culmination of myself to match my creative mind. I also wanted to preserve these learnings in something more meaningful than a

long report or essay. I decided to create a personal website on wix.com with tabs for my portfolio, about me, my theory, and my action plan. The website is very visual and uses metaphors and figures to outline who I am and who I want to be.

This assignment was one of the more difficult writing assignments I have been tasked with in the business school. It required that I analyze the learnings from the class, prioritize the most valuable lessons, and reflect on how they will shape my leadership strategy moving forward. I was proud of my ability to balance leadership theories of others while remaining introspective and authentic to my own style. This writing assignment will serve as great preparation for my writing e-portfolio at the end of this semester.