

Collaborative Writing in the Disciplines Project

ENG 1204: Virginia Tech

Draft Due: Sept 12

Final Due: Sept 19

Overview:

The main questions that this project should make you think about are:

What is generalizable about academic writing, and what is specific to each academic discipline?

In order to begin to investigate these questions, your group will look at three academic articles on roughly the same topic. These articles will come from three different academic disciplines. As a group, you will compare and contrast these articles in an attempt to come to some answers to the above question. Be careful, though, this question does not have simple answers. We will talk about academic writing as a whole and will read an article by Linton, Madigan, and Johnson where they discuss different writing conventions employed in different disciplines. Part of your task will be to see how the conventions they talk about fit the articles you read. However, don't be afraid to explore places where your assigned texts do not meet these conventions and to speculate on why these differences exist rather than simply pointing them out.

You will be writing this paper as a group in the wiki on scholar.vt.edu. We will talk more about how to work as a group and write in a wiki throughout the project. However, this project should truly be a collaboration among group members. You will be expected to talk about and negotiate both the content and the form of the text you are composing.

Audience: Your audience is peers but may be broader than just your peers in this class. Think of our class wiki as a good place to go if you wanted to get an idea of what types of academic writing are out there and how they might compare.

Sources: For this project your group will be assigned three sources. Each source will be an academic journal article on the same general topic, but each member of the group will focus on a different article from one of the disciplines. I will provide citations for the articles, and you will find them on the library database. In addition, you will want to use the article by Linton, Madigan and Johnson:

Linton, Patricia, Robert Madigan and Susan Johnson. "Introducing Students to Disciplinary Genres: The Role of the General Composition Course." *Journal of Language and Learning Across the Disciplines* 1.2 (1994): 63-78.

Purpose and Goals:

- You will work collaboratively to will begin to gain an understanding of the conventions in the three disciplines: sciences, social sciences, and humanities.
- You will apply your knowledge of the disciplines by identifying (and explaining) conventions in assigned articles.

- You will compare and contrast articles in different disciplines, thus acknowledging both the differences and the similarities between them.

Grading (15%):

Unless there are significant issues with a group member's participation, in which case you should see me immediately, your group will receive a common grade on this project. It is up to you to be responsible and work as a group, and to tell me if that isn't happening for any reason.

You will be graded on how well you meet the above project goals. I will be looking to see that you demonstrate a *rhetorical awareness*. In other words, that you are attentive to your audience, explain what they need to know, and pay attention to the context of your work (in this case the wiki).

I will also be looking at the way you engage with your sources. *Critical reading, writing, and thinking* skills will come across in the way that you provide examples and support from what you have read. It will also come across in the complexity of your position in this paper.

Process, including completing drafts on time, contributing to your group, and taking into account the feedback you receive on the draft of your project will also be important to your overall grade.

Finally, be attentive to *conventions* of grammar and citation.

Project Topics: You will provide me with your top three choices for topics and be assigned a group accordingly.

- Stem Cell Research
- Computer Games
- Mayan Culture
- Hurricanes
- Space Travel
- 9/11
- Music
- Divorce