

Cardinal Compositions

University of Louisville

ENGL 306: Analysis of Professional Writing Practices

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Corresponding Essay

- Ryan, Brandon. "Analysis of Writing Practices: Business Writing in a Scientific World." *Cardinal Compositions*, 2019-2020 issue, pp. 20-31.

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Project 2 introduces business professional writing as a subject of study through assignments that require you to gather and report information by (1) interviewing someone who writes on the job and (2) creating a transcript of the interview; (3) [analyzing their workplace writing via their documents they share with you](#); (4) creating a memo report on professional writing that (5) incorporates/synthesizes the recent literature on that topic along with information from the interview (1+2 above) and document analysis (3 above); (6) reflecting/connecting all this information to your own career goals that involve writing. Like much business and professional workplace writing, this assignment has lots of moving parts., lots of components to juggle.

Pro tip: Create a [task schedule](#) for this project.

Component 1: The Interview with a Professional

One of the purposes of this assignment is to introduce a common research skill that is used very often in the business world: interviewing. It gives you the opportunity to speak with a professional in your field of study. You will collect information about workplace (nonacademic) writing you can compare with your previous writing experiences. The information you gather in the interview will help you set goals for yourself as a student and a business professional writer.

- To begin, schedule a personal interview with a professional working in the field you want to enter. This interview needs to take place between September 19 and October 4. The sooner, the better for you.
- Make sure you will be able to meet face to face with this person in the allotted time frame.
- *Make sure they can provide you with at least 2-3 documents they have composed as part of their work. If they cannot, then you need to find someone else. This is not optional.*
- If you have not yet declared a major, select someone who writes as part of his or her job in a field you are interested in.

To prepare for the interview, review the link(s) in Course Content Folder and create an interview guide for yourself as the interviewer which includes the following:

- The name and title or area of expertise of your interviewee
- The date, time, and location of the interview
- The interviewee's address (You will need this for your thank-you letter.)
- **A statement of purpose – a 2-3 sentence explanation of your purpose for conducting the interview that you will share verbally with your subject**
- A list of 10-15 **open-ended**, logically sequenced interview questions designed to gather information about writing in your career area or in the workplace in general and the characteristics considered important in professional writing. Create a section of white space following each question so you will have room to jot quick notes for follow-up questions. At least 3-5 of these questions need to be about the documents, themselves.

Also, (1) be sure to include a question about their revision practice/process and (2) ask them how they close their emails.

See Blackboard for advice on developing your interview guide.

This interview needs to be face to face (f2f) and run at least 30 minutes. After the interview, you will do the following:

1. Archive the recording until the semester is over.
2. Create a transcript of the recording.

For another part of this assignment, ask for sample documents the interviewee has written. They may need to redact (black out) names or other sensitive information. This is fine as long as there is enough writing left to analyze.

Pro tip: You will be able to ask better questions about the documents if they send them before the interview so you have time to read them and think about them.

As soon as possible after any interview, follow up with a thank you email. The elements of workplace emails are explained on Purdue OWL. Please follow these guidelines carefully. *Thank you* emails will typically be brief and to the point. When thanking your interviewee, include a reference to specific information gained that you found particularly helpful or insightful. Also, copy me on the email and inform your subject that you have copied me. **You should actually send the email, but please wait until you have gotten feedback from me during class so you can make any necessary revisions.*

Components 2 and 3: The Researched Analysis of Writing Practices (#4-7 below)

This assignment (300 points total) asks you to do the following:

- (1) Develop an interview guide (25 pts.)
- (2) Interview and record your subject (50 pts.)
- (3) Make a transcript of the recorded interview. (50 pts.)
- (4) Acquire 2-3 documents your subject has written. (20 pts.)
- (5) Complete the document analysis worksheet. (40 pts.) Available in the course folder.
- (6) Write thank you email. (15 pts.)
- (7) **Major Project 2 Capstone:** Write a case study in memo format to me and future students of 306 *in your field* in which you (1) report your findings about your subject's workplace writing practices, (2) integrate at least four secondary sources (one of which must be Seawright along with at least one other reading from class), and (3) connect your findings to your personal career and learning goals. (100 pts.) Total: 300 points

Timeline and Due Dates via Blackboard:

Interview weeks: 9/17 -10/4

Drafting week: 10/10-10/15

Review and revision week: 10/17-10/22; Peer review on 10/17; revision workshop on 10/22.

___ Interview guide (Thursday, 9/19)

___ Interview completed, recorded, and uploaded to G-drive (Friday, 10/4, or sooner)

___ Interview transcript as appendix to draft (due with revised second draft, 10/26)

___ Thank you email sent to your interviewee (show me in class as soon as possible after interview)

___ Documents you analyzed and completed Document Analysis Worksheet (10/10)

___ Professional Writing Practices Analysis memo rough draft for **peer review** with peer review questions, ~1200-1500 words minimum in the memo body (10/17)

___ **Revised draft of PWPA case study with introductory reflective memo for Steve, ~1200-1500 words minimum in memo body (Saturday, 10/26, 11:59 P.M.)**

Rubric

Effective/successful/persuasive memo reports will do the following:

- Establish clear purpose of reporting on your primary and secondary research for clear, multiple audiences
- Make convincing arguments through clear assertions and relevant support in the way of summaries, paraphrases, quotations, and **visuals** (required for primary sources only) from both primary and secondary research

- Explain how rhetoric plays different roles -- ethos, pathos, logos, kairos, exigencies, and argumentation - in the collected documents
- Make use of clear, original, specific section titles to help organization of topics and reader navigation
- Integrate at least four secondary sources, two of which must be from class readings
- Use APA documentation, in-text and end-of-text
- Demonstrate effective revision between each draft
- Demonstrate careful editing for the portfolio version