

# Cardinal Compositions

University of Louisville

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## **ENGL 102: Writing about *Bad Ideas About Writing***

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*Cardinal Compositions*, vol. 5 (2021), pp. 59-62.

### **Corresponding Essay**

- Shobe, Zaniah. "Response to Jennifer Cunningham: Code Switching has Nothing to do with Racism." *Cardinal Compositions*, 2020-2021 issue, pp. 49-52.

**Unit 2 Major Writing Assignment:** Below is the “assignment prompt” for the major writing assignment for Unit 2. You’ll see that it’s written in the form of a “call for proposals” (CFP) for contributions to a second edition of *Bad Ideas About Writing*. (This hasn’t happened yet, but it might!) When scholars want to solicit contributions for a book or journal issue on a particular topic, they’ll circulate a CFP to invite other writers to “join the conversation.” As you read this CFP “assignment prompt,” think about how this prompt is different from previous writing assignment prompts you’ve been given.

## **Call for Proposals: *Bad Ideas About Writing* (2nd edition)**

The first edition of *Bad Ideas About Writing* was described as “an effort to name bad ideas [about writing] and suggest better ones” (Ball & Loewe, 2017: 2). Since its 2017 publication, *Bad Ideas* has been used in a number of writing classrooms and has prompted discussions in forums like *Inside Higher Ed* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

As with the first edition, the second edition intends to provide teachers, parents, students, and administrators with short, provocative, and researched answers to the age-old question of “Why Johnny Can’t Write.”<sup>1</sup> The authors of these essays will discuss, in readable, relatively jargon-free ways, why the centuries of writing instruction that undergird “public” understanding of what is expected from writing instruction and how it should be taught is mostly wrong, or at least misunderstood. The collection will provide a snapshot of major myths about writing, with suggestions for further reading for each entry. The editors hope the second edition will continue to spark debate and rethinking of myths about writing.

The primary audience of this collection is intended to be the news media, editors of national trade publications that feature regular columns on higher education and writing, teachers of writing, and college students and their parents.

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<sup>1</sup> “Why Johnny Can’t Write” was the cover article for *Newsweek*’s December 8, 1975, issue, which sparked a nationwide outcry about students’ writing abilities.

However, this second edition aims to correct some oversights of the first edition by including ideas about language, writers' identities, and multimodal writing. **To that end, the editors welcome proposals related to, though not limited to, the following topics:**

- so-called "Standard Written English" and other topics that could fit under a section titled "Bad Ideas About Language"
- Writing and Identity
- Language Difference
- Racism and Language Ideologies
- Multimodal (Digital) Writing
- Prior knowledge and writing experience
- Writing strategies (e.g., metadiscourse) and their rhetorical functions

This is not an exhaustive list, and the editors invite contributors to propose additional new topics after surveying the [table of contents for the first edition](#).

The editors seek **150-200-word proposals** for **entries that will be 1,200-1,600 words (including "Further Reading," "Keywords" and "Author Bio" sections)**. Proposals can be of two kinds:

- 1) for the main entries;
- 2) for responses that extend, complicate, and/or revise one of the main entries (or two related entries) in the first edition.

Please be sure to identify which kind of approach you intend to pursue in your proposal.

Below is a timeline for submissions. Please contact [email] with any questions. We look forward to reading your work!

<b>Date</b>	<b>What's Due</b>
Thursday, Oct. 8, 7:00 pm EST	Deadline for <b>proposals</b> . Contributors will receive feedback on their proposals on Friday, Oct. 9.
Thursday, Oct. 15, 7:00 pm EST	Deadline for <b>draft submissions</b> .
Monday, Oct. 19, 11:59 pm EST	<b>Peer reviews of draft submissions</b> due.

Sunday, Oct. 25, 11:59 pm EST	<b>Revised submissions</b> due. Contact [email] in advance if you need an extension for this deadline.
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## Important information about this assignment:

- **Rough Draft:** If you submit your rough draft on time, you will get the full 35 points of credit for your draft.
- **Peer Review:** After you submit your draft, you'll be peer reviewing at least one other peer's draft (more details on this soon). Your peer review work will count for **5%** of your final grade for the course (see syllabus, p. 8).
- **Revision:** Your revised *Bad Ideas about Writing* submission is worth **15%** of your final grade for the course (see syllabus, p. 8).
- **Grading:** To earn at least a 'B' on the revised, final version of your work, your *Bad Ideas about Writing* submission needs to:
  - Be between 1,200 and 1,600 words.
  - Follow the writing conventions of the *Bad Ideas about Writing* entries. We'll be discussing these genre conventions on our Blackboard wiki soon.
  - Use our course texts in the body of your entry. You're also welcome to refer to other relevant course texts in your "Further Reading" section. If you want to incorporate some outside sources in the body of your entry, I can offer some suggestions, though you're welcome to search for additional sources, too.
  - Include at least 3 sources in the "Further Reading" section. You don't need to have read these sources in their entirety, but you do need to include some brief context for these sources, as we've seen the authors we've read do in their *Bad Ideas* entries.
- **Earning a Higher Grade:** To improve the grade you earn on this assignment, **you can submit a second revision up until two weeks after you receive my comments and grade on your first revision. If you earn a higher grade on your revised work, I will replace the first grade with this higher grade.** Revisions should be accompanied by a cover letter discussing the changes you made. I encourage you to meet with me virtually or to email with me to talk through your revision plans before you re-submit your work.