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Curatorial Teaching:

Student Directed Inquiry in a First-Year Writing Classroom

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the connections between student agency and writing transfer through student-directed inquiry projects in a First-Year Writing classroom (FYW). Taking research and theory at the forefront of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and merging that with educational philosophy centered around egalitarian teaching and experiential learning, Curatorial Teaching is a pedagogical perspective that reimagines the connections between members of the classroom community as reciprocal. In this model, students are recognized as thoughtful participants in their own educations and are encouraged to utilize this authority to enrich their own learning. This thesis report analyzes the validity of curatorial teaching within a first-year writing course at Moravian College.

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As I begin my thesis I think back to the many people who have supported me along the way and recognize that this study is as much a culmination of their efforts as it is my own.

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RESEARCHER STANCE

What exigencies can we provide students aside from grades that would make them really commit to the process?

It seems fitting that scrawled across some early page of my notebook was an unanswered question. Being the latest recipient of the Master of Arts in Teaching Fellowship at Moravian College, I took to my first class with no direct teaching experience and a nagging sense of imposter syndrome. Wiping the sand away from the sun-bleached pages of a fresh composition book, I looked across the crowded coastline for answers. In many ways, my existence in Education at this point felt most like a question: what am I doing; am I qualified; what the heck is summative assessment anyway?

My first graduate course began on the beach. On a vacation meant to celebrate the ending of my undergraduate career. The course was a difficult one with only one assignment: build a college-level First-Year Composition course from scratch...it rested on my shoulders like the sun.

I began to remember some of my favorite experiences as a learner...

I thought of Mrs. Zimmerman's third-grade classroom; the grey lined fabric glued to the cardboard exterior of a composition book (a design that I

selected), the chapter summaries I had written from the perspective of a character in the book (a choice that I was free to make), and the frequent prompting of Mrs. Zimmerman during our classwide talks (an authentic exchange between teacher and learner). In Mrs. Zimmerman's class learning felt like fun.

Inspired by Mrs. Z I stared down at my notebook, cross-legged in the sand, I wrote an answer to my self-posed question:

*What exigencies can we provide students aside from grades that would
make them really commit to the process?*

--Giving them agency to do work they care about is a good start.

I'm sure I didn't realize the significance of Mrs. Zimmerman's pedagogy at the time (I am positive I didn't know the word) but it surely played a role in my answer—thanks Mrs. Z!

Inquiry— as was exemplified in Mrs. Zimmerman's classroom—represents what the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) identifies as a high impact practice, associated with effective pedagogy in First-Year Writing courses and writing-intensive courses in higher education (Kuh, 2008).

In my own teaching, I now recognize that the interplay between student-directed inquiry and choice as vital elements of a positive learning experience and components of student agency.

As my first graduate course continued my mind kept returning to different moments of learning I had as a student. I thought back to high school where I was an apathetic and unfocused social butterfly. Late to almost every class, I didn't study or work particularly hard on my assignments. I treated learning like an obligation, some strange form of joyless teenage employment. My secondary school detachment only extended as far as the entrance to my English courses however, particularly my honors and AP English courses taught by Mr. Roscher.

A particularly memorable project from Mr. Roscher's class tasked students with creating a film adaptation of *Hamlet*, complete with a scripted scene of our choice which we would pitch to a group of Hollywood Executives (an audience outside of the classroom community). In addition to these assigned components of the project, my group decided to design costumes (considerations for design); develop a complete score with a written rationale for the music (metacognitive/reflective writing); produce a cinematic trailer and storyboard our scene (multimodal composing)—it was the hardest I had ever worked on a project and some of the most fun I have ever had in school.

Looking back, I realized that my laziness stemmed from my inability to make choices in many of my high school classes; my choice was often to either do the minimum or (sometimes) nothing at all if it seemed the only choice available to me in a given classroom.

As my first graduate class continued I began to design my course with these positive experiences in mind recognizing that the moments that I had found most valuable as a learner and researcher made me feel as if I was actively making choices and helping to direct learning. I wanted my course to work towards those same ends. This reflective process helped me realize, too, that my interest in writing was a reflection of this inherent desire for agency.

As the semester came to a close I was left with a rough outline of “Choose Your Own Adventure” (then under the title “How are You Writing”) and the general contours of the experience I will discuss throughout this thesis. In a way, “Choose Your Own Adventure” is an homage to all the fantastic teachers and experiences I have had along the way; I only hope that my own teaching can in some way foster the same kinds of feelings that I was fortunate enough to have throughout my own education.

I doubt I will ever fully answer the question on the front of my notebook, but what I had written in response seemed, then, good enough. Reflecting now on my experience teaching the class I would say at the very least it was a step in the right direction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

First-Year Composition (FYC) is one of the few courses that undergraduate students regardless of program of study or academic focus share across their academic experiences. This seemingly ubiquitous course carries with it the lofty goal of introducing Freshman to the expectations and rigors of college-level reading and writing but oftentimes students report receiving little value from it. Thirty percent of First-Year Students from Arts/Science focused Baccalaureate Colleges reported ‘some’ or ‘very little’ development of their ability to write clearly and effectively according to a national survey conducted in 2017 by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2017).

These results were echoed in these student’ perceptions of their abilities to speak clearly and effectively (43%); to think critically and analytically (19%); to analyze numerical and statistical information (46%); and to collaborate (34%) (NSSE, 2017). These figures are emblematic of an issue prevalent within First-Year Writing (FYW) contexts: how can instructors create course-relevant content that works towards the development of these capacities with a student population of varying academic foci, ability level, and expectation for a writing classroom—a question at the fore of Rhetoric and Writing Studies.

Historical Background: Rhetoric and Writing Studies

The field of Rhetoric and Composition began to establish significant footing in American Educational contexts in the early 20th century as a focus on collegiate writing proficiency came to the fore in tandem with the development of federal public schooling. Through the 1920s three major rhetorical perspectives formed: A) current-traditional rhetoric at institutions like Harvard and Columbia; B) rhetorics of liberal culture at Princeton and Yale; and C) rhetorics for public discourse at Michigan and Ohio University (Berlin, 1987).

At the time the connection between literature and rhetoric was still strong, and the positioning of rhetorical perspective amongst a literature focused English department remained pervasive. This structure changed as student writing focus shifted with Progressive education, leading ultimately to a movement away from Rhetoric in the 1930s most notably on the East Coast and in the Midwest (Berlin, 1987). Organizations like the National Council for the Teachers of English (NCTE) however, did provide a forum for composition-focused educators—many of them socio-linguists—to focus their efforts on first-year communication courses which were prevalent at the time (Coxwell-Teague & Lunsford, 2014).

By the 1940s the field of rhetoric returned, slowly, to steadier footing on the American campus—gaining increased representation across colleges and universities nationwide—as a focus on preparing students as effective

communicators became an emphasis in higher education. Holding its inaugural meeting in 1947, the field's [now] largest conference, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), established fundamental terms of the discipline that would become part of the larger collegiate lexicon (Coxwell-Teague & Lunsford 2014; Berlin, 1987) as well as practically oriented the discipline within questions of student composition. While still heavily connected with English, CCCC's worked to differentiate rhetoricians and literary theorists.

By the 1970s Rhetoric and Composition had aligned itself with the outcropping of First-Year Writing courses (Berlin, 1987). The questions of the discipline—notably the connections between classical rhetorical principles and contemporary composition seated scholars in the field as likely candidates to staff and research these courses. In addition, through National Endowment for the Humanities sponsored seminars and seminal publications throughout the 1970s and 80s, the field expanded introducing several new areas of study within composition in the decades that followed. (Coxwell-Teague & Lunsford 2014). This expansion introduced one such area, Writing Studies, which began to focus on the elements of writing pedagogy and disciplinarity (Coxwell-Teague & Lunsford 2014).

In our current context, Writing Studies scholars continue to engage with one another at events like CCCC's, maintain a focus on the elements of rhetorical situation as was emphasized in the 20th century, and now also focus on the ways digital contexts, writing process, and issues of social justice play in writing amongst many other foci (Cushman, 1999; Selfe & Selfe, 1994; Sommers, 1980).

The field also maintains its focus on first-year composition, and through the work of scholars like Anne Beaufort (2007) and Kathleen Blake-Yancey (2014) oriented its focus towards writing transfer as a measure of course success.

Organizing Transfer through Activity Theory

Put simply, transfer is one's ability to take knowledge gained from a previous context and effectively apply it in a new one. Coined by Psychologists in the late 20th century, the concept has been taken up by Writing Studies scholars to describe the ways in which students move their learned experiences to new contexts (Bandura, 1977). Writing transfer, specifically, refers to one's ability to bring the experiences they have had in a past writing experience to a new writing situation, complete with a new purpose and audience (Moore, 2017). In first-year writing course, where students are expected to develop essential composition skills that they can then use throughout their academic careers, focusing on writing transfer became an area of continued research for Writing Studies scholars

who were frequently staffing, overseeing, and researching first-year writing courses across the country.

As a result of the field's interest, the importance of recognizing points of transfer became tantamount: not only was research dedicated to preparing students with a recognition of the habits of mind needed to transfer their knowledge into future writing experiences, but also towards the ways student experiences preceding college lead to established writing habits as they transferred their secondary education writing experience to the college level.

Looking at this transition from High School to college, David Bartholomae's (1985/2005) seminal text, "Inventing the University" highlights new students' difficulty shifting writerly focus to a given audience. Further, Bartholomae described these new students' efforts to recognize collegiate discourse communities as writers, effectively 'inventing' these communities before truly recognizing/entering them (Bartholomae, 1985/2005). These issues, both tied to audience, raised questions about the appropriateness of a unified expectation for student writers entering college. Rather, the importance of understanding the contingent nature of campuses and the myriad experiences of students. Students were not coming from a collective experience towards some shared context—quite the contrary. As such, contemporary scholars began to reconsider the ways in which FYW can focus on transfer in multiple capacities.

McManigell Grijalva (2016) utilized a grounded theory to understand the transfer recognition of High-school seniors and college freshman through a series of questionnaires and surveys to discover student's recognition of activity systems that they were both affiliated with and aspired towards. The study reported that those college students who had completed an experiential-learning centric first-year composition course more readily identified different writing contexts than their high school counterparts (McManigell Grijalva, 2016). Taken together, the findings of McManigell Grijalva indicate that experiential learning empowers students to recognize writing contexts (the complex overlapping activity systems of a college campus) working in response to Bartholomae's claims and in tandem with the work of Moore, Wardle and other transfer scholars.

Russell (1995) posits that these contexts can be understood through activity theory. Activity theory orients organizations into aptly named "activity systems" which, according to Russell (1995), are, "goal-directed, historically-situated, cooperative human interactions." Conceptualizing the FYW classroom as an activity system and subsequent courses within a college experience as interconnected systems, allows us to more clearly map out what Writing Studies scholar Donna Qualley defines as "the transfer terrain" of our students as they move through college (Qualley, 2016; McManigell Grijalva,

2016; Driscoll & Wells, 2012), and recognize the variety of experience our students bring with them from high school (Bartholomae, 1985).

Looking at the transfer terrain of my own students one can see the complex interworking Writing at Moravian program:

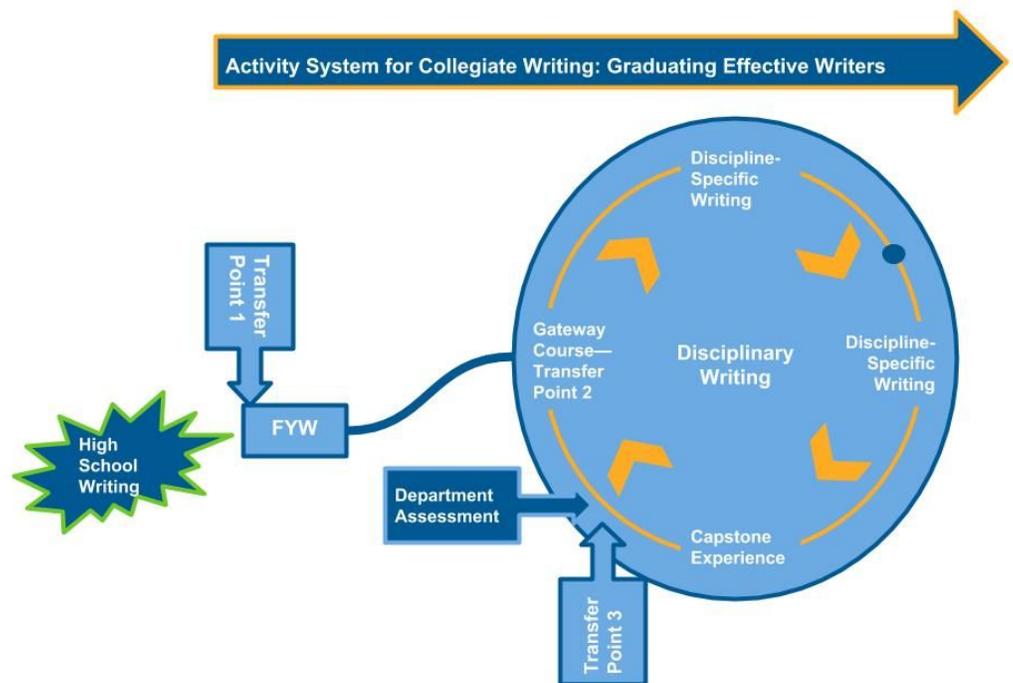


Figure 1: Student Writing Through College Activity System

Pictured above is a larger activity system representing the institutional experiences of a student as developed by the Writing at Moravian program (Fodrey, Mikovits, & Hassay, 2016). This system orients the travel of students (represented in this figure as a blue ball) amongst the interconnected activity

systems that make up their collegiate experience. Within the model, notes made for three significant points of transfer are listed: 1) the experience marked by Bartholomae as students leave their high schools (visualized as an amorphous shape to convey the variability of that experience for incoming students); 2) a point of transfer for students where students enter into their discipline; 3) a transfer point as students shift into a new context after completing their capstone experience within their respective program. The positioning of FYW in this context and on many campuses, as both the entrance to higher education and the gateway into disciplinary writing, made this middle-ground course a particularly important point for writerly development.

Transfer in an FYW Context

Research on transfer in FYW courses led to an understanding of its variations, specifically high and low-road transfer as defined by Psychologists Gavriel Salomon and D.N. Perkins (1989). Near transfer occurs when work being done is very similar in either process or product to something that has been completed in the past. Far transfer, on the other hand, is the transfer of knowledge between contexts where connections are less clear (Moore, 2017). These variations of how we understand transfer further complicated efforts to understand transfer terrains (and abstracted activity systems even further) creating questions about what knowledge could be provided to students in an FYW course that could

be valuable immediately in near transfer contexts and consistently drawn upon in far transfer contexts. This general line of inquiry spawned a number of studies dedicated to transfer in FYW contexts.

The work of Jenn Fishman and Mary Jo Reiff's (2011) "Taking It on the Road: Transferring Knowledge about Rhetoric and Writing Across Curricula and Campuses" studied an FYW course that emphasized concepts of writings studies, notably genre, which she later discovered served as an exemplar of high and low road transfer. In subsequent work Reiff found that for some students, transferring genre knowledge into new contexts meant simply replicating what had been done previously—sometimes to a fault—in low road transfer while other students developed nuanced understandings of genre conventions that they used to navigate the complex and diverse writing situations they encountered in college (Bawarashi & Reiff, 2011)

In a longitudinal study of seven student writers at her institution that had completed her first-year composition (FYC) course,¹ FYC researcher Elizabeth Wardle, found that her students both recognized the learning of discourse analysis—a transfer-focused practice in FYC courses—but did not explicitly mention the need to *generalize* what they did in FYC in subsequent courses (Wardle, 2007). Students' ability to generalize as reported by Wardle calls back to

¹ First-Year Composition in this context is synonymous with FYW.

one's metacognitive ability to recognize the connection between skills and tasks across class contexts—a component of high road transfer. While her students did not speak directly to these findings their discussions of curricular experiences and the role FYC played in preparing them for their programs of study do, in fact, tie back to this focus on generalization.

Following a period of inquiry stemming from the late 1980s, the ideas of near and far transfer came to the fore of the discipline to help explain how the complexities of a network of overlapping activity systems on a college campus can be conceptualized. In the FYW context, an emphasis on both near and far transfer situations becomes important to accommodate the diverse academic preparations and planned futures of first-year students. Thinking to the studies conducted by Bawarshi, Reiff, Fishman, and Wardle, students' reported abilities to both replicate knowledge in new contexts and adapt knowledge for new situations stems first from teaching practices poised to facilitate transfer. With this in mind, a focus on transfer in FYW courses ultimately empowered students to recognize and write effectively in new activity systems, while embracing student plans for the future by inviting them to consider instances when their learning may be called into action.

The Teaching for Transfer Curriculum. Today, a focus on transfer (both near and far) communicated to students throughout a semester has solidified its

place in FYW courses as a framework to help students recognize the connections between their FYW experiences and their larger academic foci (Blythe, 2016; Adler Kassner, Majewski, & Koshnick, 2012; Qualley 2016). Kathleen Blake Yancey, Liane Robert, and Kara Taczak's 2014 textbook *Writing Across Contexts: Transfer, Composition, and Sites of Writing* served as the first major text to formalize this emphasis on transfer through the Teaching for Transfer Curriculum (TFT).

“If students don't remember, or can't reproduce the terminology for common academic writing practices, can they be said to have ‘learned them’” ask Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak in the introduction of *Writing Across Contexts*. The TFT curriculum provides consistent opportunities for students to write reflectively about their writing utilizing a shared set of key terms that are based in writing studies like audience, genre, and discourse community (Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, 2014). Through the use of consistent key terms in a TFT curriculum, students are able to develop a shared lexicon and understanding of writing which they engage in self and group dialogue about and within throughout the semester (Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, 2014). Ultimately, the repeated use of these key terms in assignments which ask students to be explicit in purpose, genre, and audience ideally creates habits of mind that allow for students to recognize these elements of writing which exist across contexts, allowing for

continued application in future contexts. For example, being metacognitive about audience in an FYW course will (ideally) help a student maintain that practice in their major and continue to consider who they are writing for in their subsequent courses.

Across the TFT curriculum, the use of consistent reflective journals, writing assignments utilizing various genres, conferences with the instructor, and class discussions all work towards writing development. Looking at the connections between TFT and writing oftentimes leads to a connection with Rhetorical Genre Theory. Specifically, how rhetorical genre theory provides a framework to discuss transfer with students by first having them critically consider *what* they are writing. .

Rhetorical Genre Theory. Rhetorical Genre Theory is a subsection of a larger body of work considering written genres stemming from the work of compositionist Carolyn Miller in the early 1980s (Paré, 2014). From a rhetorical perspective, genre theory allows one to teach writing by inviting students to look at written genres and their conventions as elements; ultimately speaking to the larger values of the discourse community where the writing is created (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). For example, recognizing that medical notes written by nurses have conventions (e.g. medical jargon, concision, and are completed using a consistent organizational form) allows one to begin to understand the values of

the discourse community at large. By looking at a multitude of genres produced within a discourse community, and analyzing the conventions of those genres as purposeful and representative of considerations of the community, a rhetorical genre theorist can begin to construct an understanding of the discourse community itself. Bawarshi and Reiff (2010) list a basic set of considerations for fostering rhetorical genre theory: setting, subject, participants, and purposes. Following these more diagnostic recognitions genre theorists can begin identifying recurrent patterns within the writing and analyzing those patterns to understand how they inform and speak to the larger situation.

Rhetorical Genre theory also recognizes the flexibility within a genre and the formation of new genres. These shifts and creations outside of a pre established genre are called “instances” (Adler Kassner & Wardle, 2015). Recognizing that no single instance constitutes a genre, one must find repeated occurrences (instances) of similar conventions across artifacts which are situated within a consistent activity system to recognize the formation of a genre (Paré, 2014, Wardle & Adler-Kassner, 2015). Taken together, rhetorical genre theory then not only provides a framework for understanding genres but also recognizing them.

To return to the previous example, medical notes are oftentimes written by similar authors, for similar audiences, and in similar contexts which is what

researcher Rachel Lewis (2011) recognizes as recurrent situation. For Lewis, genre exists, too, as a recurring form of communication (with conventions used to communicate effectively within that form). As such, Rhetorical Genre Theory posits that a consistent and important connection exists between rhetorical situation and genre (Paré, 2014; Lewis, 2011). In order for students to be able to recognize convention and use genre analysis as a platform for larger understanding several analytical processes must be fostered. In addition, a recognition of the field of writing studies (where Rhetorical Genre theory is a frequently employed analytical framework) is important for contextualizing the practice for students within an academic discipline. While rhetorical genre theory presents ways for mapping based on text, threshold concepts of writing studies represent the entrypoint for students into the field of rhetoric and writing studies.

Threshold Concepts. Threshold concepts are the defining features of a specific discipline. Ideas that are generally ubiquitous and that define the shared understandings of members of that discourse community. These concepts, usually a list of them, can be presented as not only a way to reify the knowledge of members of the discourse community but also to inform non-members about the tenets of the given discipline (Qualley, 2016; Adler-Kassner, & Wardle, 2015). Elizabeth Wardle and Linda Adler Kassner's *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts in Writing Studies* serves as both a vehicle into the discipline and as a

way for those already engaged in writing studies to recognize the ideas that make up the foundation of the discipline. In their book they outline five threshold concepts:

Writing is a social and rhetorical activity-this concept helps us recognize the importance of audience, and is used in a writing studies context to explore authorly position, audience, kairos (timeliness), context, and the connection between these features in a piece of writing.

Writing speaks to situations through recognizable forms-this concept communicates that writing (like conversation) is connected to social situation and audience, but unlike conversation which occurs in a concrete instance, writing can shift to multiple situations and audiences. This section turns towards rhetorical genre theory as well in that it recognizes the inherent connection between genre and discipline (Bawarashi & Reiff, 2010).

Writing Enacts and Creates Identities and Ideologies-this concept focuses on authorial position. More specifically, that every writer carries with them a set of ideologies that make up their identity which is evident in one's writing.

All Writers have more to Learn-This concept is tied to the ideas of writing process—bringing forth, once again, ideas of transfer as

mentioned previously (Moore, 2017; McManigell Grijalva, 2016; Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, 2014).

Writing is (also always) a Cognitive Activity-this concept discusses the cognitive and metacognitive moves writers employ throughout the writing process.

Outlining these defining characteristics as additional points of understanding specifically tied to writing studies helps establish a base level understanding of rhetorical situation and the writing conventions that characterize Writing Studies. Adler Kassner, Majewski, and Koshnick (2012) studied transfer across a writing and history course through a series of surveys, instructor focus groups, and student interviews to explore the ways in which threshold concepts both helped students recognize discourse communities and establish the metacognitive skills needed to transfer their skills across them. Their findings suggested that while students struggled to recognize discourse community, threshold concepts served as a promising entrypoint to exemplifying writing transfer (Adler Kassner, Majewski, & Koshnick 2012).

The Importance of Agency—Student Choice in Action and Curatorial Teaching in Theory

While my course “Choose Your Own Adventure” is theoretically positioned within Rhetoric and Writing Studies and utilizes the TFT curriculum, it

is philosophically oriented within ideas of experiential learning and agency based pedagogies. In the following section I will discuss the importance of agency: philosophically in Curatorial Teaching and pragmatically through inquiry projects. Making note of the ways that this philosophical underpinning informs my FYW classroom.

The work of John Dewey and Paulo Freire both recognize that the student's role in the classroom is more than that of a disengaged recipient. Freire's conceptions of "resolving the teacher-student contradiction" and to the impacts of my idea of a non-oppressive classroom being one where a teacher recognizes their own position and the power that goes with it in an effort to offer students opportunities of increased agency (Freire, 1968). In practice, recognizing the synergy of teacher and learner. Dewey, too, problematizes a definition of learning relegated to transmitting "bodies" of knowledge based within the criteria of what was without consideration of the positionalities of our students and the reality that our context is changing (Dewey, 2015). Instead, Dewey advocates for experience in the classroom. More specifically, for students to be able to recognize moments of their lived experiences as points of growth through reflection and meaning-making practices. This emphasis on experiential learning and the placement of the student at the center of learning advocated for by Dewey led to a progressive shift in Education in the 1940's and ultimately has led to a

recognition of experiential learning and service learning initiatives as valuable in contemporary writing classrooms (Berlin, 1987; Grivalja, 2016). In both contexts, a recognition of the student as a thoughtful agent of their learning is paramount.

Teaching in a curatorial model is then a process of curating impactful moments for students and fostering a community of critical thinking in response to Dewey's recognition of the differences between aesthetic and anesthetic experiences. For Dewey, experience occurs continuously, but these experiences are not all equal (Dewey, 1934). An aesthetic experience fosters some form of fulfilment, and that is, in itself, rewarding (Dewey, 1934; Dewey, 2015). Learning, then, is a process of discovery fostered through those moments. These moments are inherently tied to Dewey's conceptions of experience. Anesthetic experiences for Dewey are those moments where one's senses are turned off and where meaningful learning unfortunately does not occur (Dewey, 2015).

Looking at the work of Freire and critical pedagogy, he too recognizes the importance of learning as beginning within the learner themselves (Freire, 1968). Critical pedagogy, however, is focused on identifying current problems facing a community orienting class efforts towards rectifying those issues. In both contexts an emphasis on pragmatic identification is present, but towards different ends. Taken together, we can begin to recognize a synergy stemming from student-led

learning as producing aesthetic learning experiences (Dewey, 2015; Dewey, 1938; Freire, 1968).

Thinking to how the works of Freire and Dewey synergize with that of contemporary Rhetoric and Composition/Writing Studies scholarship one can see an emphasis on collaborative learning as an important component in fostering student identity (Bruffee, 1984). Notably the work of John Trimbur (1989) and his focus on consensus as a marker of a democratic classroom empowers students to seek out societal systems seems quite tied to that of Freire's Critical Pedagogy which is concerned with oppressive institutions affecting populations (Freire, 1968). For Trimbur, collaborative learning "organizes students not just to work together on common projects but more important to engage in a process of intellectual negotiation and collective decision making" (p. 602). This sentiment is echoed also in the work of compositionists who are concerned with experiential learning—notably, service learning opportunities in a community. The work of both Ellen Cushman (1999) and Regina McManigell Grijalva (2016) center around the value of service learning as presenting students with authentic rhetorical situations and fostering citizenship within students. Researchers from the "Meaningful Writing Project" too emphasized the importance of authentic, *real world* writing for students, noting that over 33 percent of student highlighted personal connections as what makes a writing experience meaningful to the

learner (much like Dewey and Freire posited) (Eodice, Geller, & Lerner, 2017). Their mixed methods study also found 69 percent of students believed that their most meaningful writing project would contribute to future writing situations (Eodice, Geller, & Lerner, 2017).

The use of multimodal pedagogies has also become a productive and popular pedagogical direction for the writing classroom especially as our conceptions of text, and what is expected in a composition course, expands. Students are engaging with media in various formats everyday. It has become cliché to note their uses of social media, their engagement with videos both as viewers and creators, but in the First-Year Composition space making sure that our courses are recognizing the holistic and encompassing nature of student engagement and production of text is essential to validating the genre knowledge that they are bringing into the college classroom. These important considerations of meaning have led to my own classroom practices most notably a student-led inquiry project called *Discovering a Discipline* that combines the classifications noted by Eodice, Geller, and Lerner with the philosophical underpinnings of Dewey's experiential learning and Freire's conceptions of Critical Pedagogy.

Across this literature review, I have highlighted several issues at the forefront of the FYW context, making note of the theory and pedagogical practices that are relevant to these issues and making connections between those

theories and the philosophical underpinnings of the course that will serve as the venue for my research. In the section that follows I will provide details about my own course design and how I planned to work towards meaningful learning for my students as outlined in this section's introduction. Further, I will talk about the data collection measures embedded in my coursework as well as the analysis of this data in the Spring semester of the 2018-19 academic year.

METHODOLOGY

Research Goals

In March 2018 Moravian inducted its first class of Tri-Alpha honors society. An honors society created by Moravian to recognize the significant first-generation college student population on our campus— 21% of the total undergraduate population (Moravian Institutional Research, 2018). In my own experience as a first generation college student, I was not sure what I wanted to major in, or what many of the programs at Moravian truly offered. My family didn't know the difference between majors, or what college credits were. I was unsure who to ask for help or really what questions I should have been asking in the first place. As a Freshman, I was confused.

Lucky for me I was connected to a great advisor who helped me eventually decide on the English major but for some students I would imagine that this decision is much more daunting because they cannot find answers to their own questions about the curriculums on their campus. Choose Your Own Adventure was developed in response to this experience, with a final project titled Discovering a Discipline meant to invite students to research departments of interest and also develop productive tools for future inquiries into academic programs. With such a large percentage of the 2018 Moravian student body being first-generation college students, my course was positioned as a particularly

interesting option for students who may not be familiar with college-contexts.

Furthermore, my study, conducted in the Fall 2018 semester, was aimed at helping those incoming students (first-generation and not) while also answering two research questions initially posited in the Spring 2017 semester:

- 1. How will agency based pedagogies galvanize transfer-centric learning in a First-Year Composition course?**
- 2. How can student-led inquiry projects and a curatorial teaching model foster written, communicative, and cognitive development in first-year college students?**

In order to answer these guiding research questions, I used a qualitative research process heavily built upon student-produced artifacts, student responses, and my own classroom observations.

Setting

My research was conducted in a First-Year Writing course (FYWS) titled Choose Your Own Adventure, with a cohort of 18 first semester freshmen from Moravian College's 2022 class. Moravian College, a Small Liberal Arts College in Eastern Pennsylvania with around 1,800 daily undergraduate students, has academic programs spread across two schools: the School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences as well the School of Natural and Health Sciences. Students entering the FYWS program represent a broad range of academic interests and

while many find FYWS courses that feature topics in line with their academic interests, many still enter into courses that are not aligned to a particular discipline in which they plan to major. As such these courses are oftentimes filled with a wide range of academic interests, ability levels, and educational backgrounds.

In response to this diverse group of students, my course (Appendix A) was designed to feature inquiry projects focused on academic discourse broadly (which would ideally be helpful in myriad contexts and could be of interest to all students). Further still, this course's culminating project, Discovering a Discipline, was designed to provide students an opportunity to study a discipline of their choice; allowing for complex investigations of a discipline of particular interest on campus so as to build a knowledge base of a particularly relevant curricula for students.

As part of Moravian College's First Year Writing program. First-Year Writing Seminar (FYWS) brings faculty from across the disciplines together to introduce, "college life by outlining academic expectations and helping the student to develop critical thinking skills," to each year's cohort of incoming freshman (Fodrey, 2017).

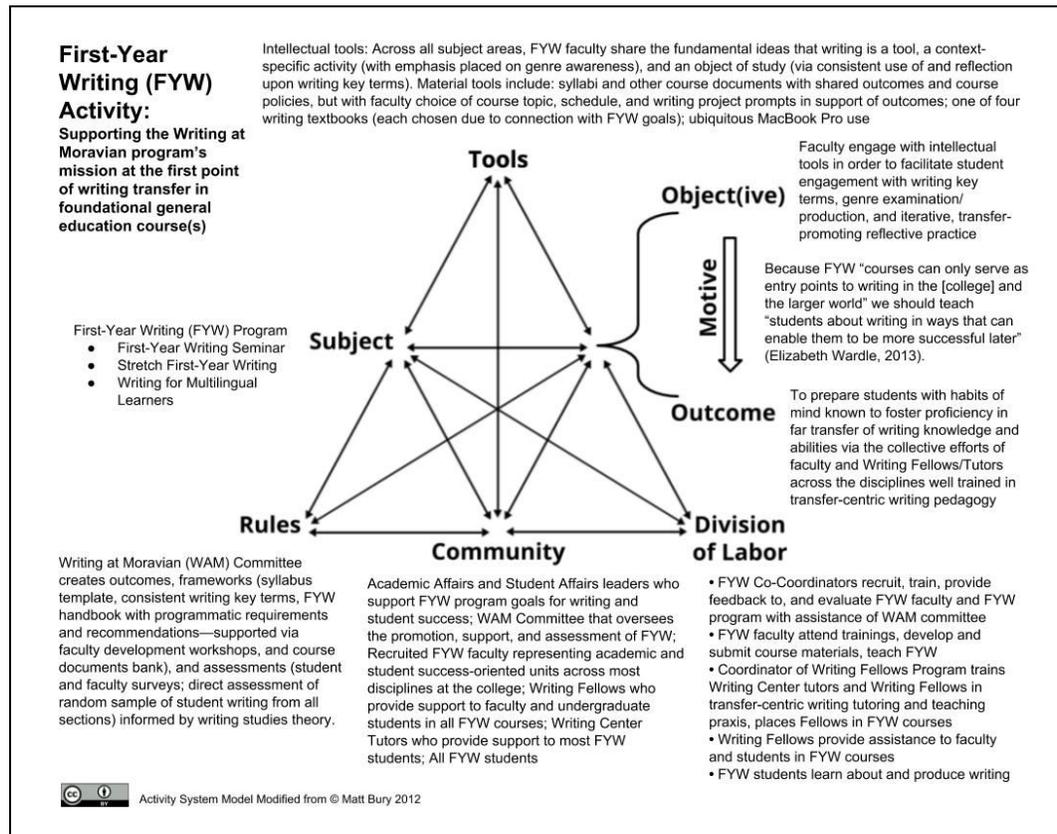


Figure 2: Moravian College FYW Activity System

Represented above is the First-Year Writing Activity System at Moravian. I want to call attention to the motive within this system: “Because FYW courses can only serve as entry points to writing in the [college] and the larger world” we should teach students about writing in ways that can enable them to be more successful later” (Fodrey, Mikovits, & Hassay, 2018). This motive really undergirds all of the work happening in FYW at Moravian and with that in mind I knew any approach to Choose Your Own Adventure would really have to focus

on offering my students opportunities for transfer, both as they transitioned into College writing from high school (as I noted with the previously generated activity system) and after, as they explored the different academic programs on campus. Choose Your Own Adventure met for three 70-minute periods per week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for a duration of 16 weeks in which my students completed three major projects as well as a series of other classwork building towards the aims outlined above.

Methods of Data Collection

Throughout the study data was collected in two primary ways: student-produced data and researcher-facilitated data gathering. Listed below are the various sources of gathered data from the course with recognition of which category each falls within.

Student Work. Across the course of the semester students engaged in a series of projects and informal assignments that not only served as forms of assessment within the course, but research artifacts for the study itself. All major assignments were placed onto Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl's revised Bloom's Taxonomy (2001) in order to assess student written, communicative, and cognitive development.

	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Factual Knowledge (5)						
Conceptual Knowledge (9)						
Procedural Knowledge (10)						
Metacognitive Knowledge (6)						

Figure 3: Bloom's Revised Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)

All classroom practices that served as scaffolding for those assignments were assessed in relation to student reflections as well as via the assessments provided on attached assignments. At the end of the semester, once grades had been submitted, I was able to review the submitted consent documents. Out of the 18 students in my course for the Fall 2018 semester, 13 provided consent whose work I gathered via a Learning Management Software Moravian uses called Canvas these materials include:

- **Classroom practices**
 - Reading Responses
 - Often in the form of discussion board posts, these informal assignments asked students questions about course readings

in preparation for classwide discussion and in-class activities. These often fell within cognitive process dimension 4 (analyze) and worked towards different knowledge dimensions depending upon the assigned reading.

- Reflective Journals
 - Oftentimes attached to a given major assignment, these reflective journals and process comments tasked students with evaluating (cognitive process 5) their own work, using evidence from their deliverable (procedural knowledge) in tandem with course content (conceptual knowledge) to provide an authentic critique and plan for the future (metacognitive knowledge).
- Padlet Posts
 - Frequently used in tandem with classwide discussion, students were encouraged to participate anonymously on these boards. NOTE: Because these posts were anonymous, and not all students provided consent in my study, no examples are included in my shared student work.
- 5/1 Presentation & Persuasive/Informative Presentations

- This brief presentation was meant to develop students' writing process knowledge, specifically the presentation outline genre (procedural knowledge) as they worked within the application cognitive process dimension.
- **Graded Assignments**
 - Digital Response Videos
 - A series of assignments that ask students to create (cognitive process 6) towards a series of prompts including reflections, explanations of concepts, and descriptions of research progress (metacognitive, conceptual, and procedural knowledges).
 - Disciplinary Writing Analysis
 - A generic criticism that tasked students with engaging in the Writing Studies discourse community, identifying pieces of academic discourse they identified as genres (cognitive process 4: analyze), and producing a thoughtful analysis of their collected artifacts (conceptual knowledge).
 - Discovering a Discipline Research Project
 - A student-directed research project where small groups selected academic programs on Moravian's campus to

conduct an in-depth study on following a general methodology that included qualitative and quantitative data gathering processes but was otherwise completely student driven (cognitive process 6: create). Students were tasked with developing an in-depth report and corresponding presentation along with an iterative research portfolio which marked their research progress throughout (factual, procedural, conceptual, and metacognitive knowledges).

Observational Field Log. Throughout my study I recorded my own observations and interactions with students in a series of Google Folders connected to each student name. At the conclusion of the study I collected notes from those students who provided consent and used them to develop a coding matrix alongside the student work students submitted throughout the semester.

In both direct and indirect contexts, data were transcribed (in the case of digital response videos) and coded student using Joey Saldana's strategies in his 2009 text *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. This qualitative data helped me establish baselines for student engagement with readings, student understanding of course content, and the extent of classroom discussion—important factors for aesthetic learning experience displayed longitudinally across a semester.

Trustworthiness

Before my study began I took several steps to ensure that my research process was both ethical for students and appropriate for my context. Initially, I submitted details about my research design and methodology to Moravian College's Human Subjects Internal Review Board (Appendix B). This proposal was informed by discussions of research design with classmates and instructors as well as courses focusing on both Action Research and Ethics. HSIRB reviewed and approved my study, which outlines a general research timeline as well as provides both the data collection measures and consent forms which were distributed to my students.

Following this initial process, I communicated with Dr. Crystal Fodrey, who serves as the director of the First-Year Writing program (FYWS), a program within which I currently teach and conduct my research, and received her permission to conduct my study in the FYWS course, I was contracted to teach for the 2018-19 AY (Appendix C). After receiving approval from my director, I contacted my Writing Fellow, a Sophomore student named Ryan Scott, to discuss my research plans and ensure her willingness to act as my research liaison for the process. In this role, my Writing Fellow is tasked with both distributing and collecting student consent forms for the study as well as serving as a contact for all students throughout the semester should they wish to withdraw their consent.

In this way, I ensured that no bias existed when working with students and only accessed these consent forms following my submission of final grades at the end of the Fall semester. Because my research practices are centralized within the classroom practices of the course, all students participated in all activities. With this model, however, all students were protected and all data was filtered based on the consent provided as the only accessible data came from students who provided consent.

My students were informed of my research process on the first day of classes. In addition, my course syllabus (Appendix A) provided a general description of my research process as well as information about their research liaison, the opt-out process, and my own positionality as a graduate student within the Moravian College Master of Arts in Teaching program. Following the establishment of basic classroom practices, my students were invited to opt into the research process by signing off on a generated informed consent document (Appendix D) and informed that they could opt-out of the research process at any point throughout the semester. These opt-outs, again, were overseen by my Writing Fellow so as to avoid a conflict of interest as I conducted my study.

OUR STORY

To begin my story I think it first important to make it clear that it wouldn't have been possible without the amazing students of LinC 101 J, Choose Your Own Adventure, that I had the pleasure of spending my first semester with. Truly, I could not have asked for a group of more engaged, courageous, and spirited students—every success that I had this semester stemmed as much from the community we had created together as it did my own design. It would be disingenuous to point towards the successes and all of the fantastic moments of learning in the pages that follow as anything less than a collaboration. As much as I had hoped and more, my class was an absolute joy and I hope that my students feel in some ways the same.

I would be remiss to not also mention Ryan Scott, the Writing Fellow of my course, whose tireless effort quickly helped us realize that her position as assistant was going to take a backseat to the relationships that she was building in the classroom. She was truly my eyes and ears in the class and consistently helped me recognize areas where my teaching could change to answer the needs of my students. Without her, I don't think many of the narratives that follow would be possible.

Finally, I want to also make note of the fantastic community of faculty who make up the Moravian First-Year Writing program, both directors of Writing

at Moravian (who oversee First-Year Writing at Moravian) and the fantastic faculty who shared their own experiences, insights, and ideas with me. Without their constant patience, I would never have been able to sort through my ideas and without their incredible perspective I would have never separated the good ones from the bad.

I am so glad I didn't have to go it alone—thank you, everyone, for the story that follows; for the fantastic experience; the universe knows I couldn't have done it as well without you.

A perspiring ceiling tile. (Week 1)

Figure 4: A leaky ceiling tile



The languid pool of unknown condensation resting on the table, dead center front row, was perhaps some kind of metaphor for what my semester would become. I stared out at a group of anonymous faces, oft disturbed by another falling

droplet. A sagging ceiling tile was the origin of the literal and metaphorical lake separating me from my students, and as each dropped increased this mysterious

lake's dominion over the front row, I silently hoped that this plumbing hiccup wouldn't then lead to no students, ever, sitting in the front row...

I think: *oh God how could this have started any worse*

A cool droplet slides down the center of my back, my short sleeved white dress shirt catching it somewhere between my shoulder blades and the small of my back—no ceiling tile this time, just nerves (it didn't help that we were teaching in 90 degree heat).

Standing in a room at least twice my age with air conditioning as weak and sputtering as my voice in this moment I begin to introduce myself before stopping to find some way to cool the space down.

I move to a window..no budge...

I return to the center of the room, behind the sporadic drops of tile-water, to stare back at my students. My hands find the warm reprieve of my pockets as a joke leaves my lips. I don't remember it now but I do remember it landed—somewhat—with a few audible responses from the mysterious gallery of faces that at this point carried with them a collective of features including but not limited to: glazed iris, slumping posture, and the slow and silent tumble of

fingertips tapping across linoleum desktop. “Is this anyone’s first class?” I ask to the group. The response of a few hands and a smile.

Behind a pair of glasses, Vivian enters the room, perhaps even more flustered than I am at this moment, apologizing profusely; explaining fervently how she missed the shuttle and that she won’t be five minutes late again.

Gosh it's only been five minutes—I think...

I don’t mind her being late (I have cultivated an image associated with tardiness myself) I am more taken aback by just how slowly time is moving, as if each drop from the ceiling is another second. Passing by without any clear consistent pattern, slow, slower still if you pay close attention...

The sounds of conditioned air, bathing us in a lukewarm embrace, the product of an AC unit I imagine is, much like the room, older than me.

“Welcome to Choose Your Own Adventure, my name is Chris and to my left is our Writing Fellow, Ryan Scott; welcome to Moravian I hope your first day is off to a good start.”

Fast forward to me writing this thesis and I think back to the tile as a fantastic visual metaphor to my own delivery that day. Swollen with fear, letting drops of apprehension slip into the class every so often. Not enough to warrant a complete disaster, but enough of a nuisance to alert the passive observer that something is amiss. When class ended I wrote an email to facilities:

Work Order ID:18059 with a status of New Request has been received.

A ceiling tile in Comenius 101 is sagging heavily and leaking water—I believe it is leaking from the restrooms directly above that classroom. - for

Location | Building: Main Street Campus | Comenius Hall

Area: 1st Floor

Area Number: Comenius 101

GROSS, I know, but let's be honest, it was just a puddle. I was overreacting and in keeping with the metaphor I was also hyper aware of my own nervous speaking more than anyone else...At least that is what my Writing Fellow Ryan assured me as we walked across the academic quad to my office, but perhaps that was just her encouraging me to get better...Nevertheless when I returned to the classroom two days later the ceiling tile and my nerves were gone, the outline of a puddle wiped clean stayed behind on the desk in front of Cassandra. She wasn't late and I wasn't terrified. Perhaps just a little nervous.

Surprise Sitcom (Week 2): The Office and student's creative choices in Digital Response Videos

As the first week of the semester came to a close I asked my students to create literacy narrative videos. I read components of my assignment sheet to the

class, “focus on a specific, impactful experience with writing or reading and tell the story of that experience in a short, engaging video.”

Not only was this the first project of the course beyond class readings, but it was also the first of a series of response videos for the semester that I had hoped would encompass part of the reflective writing that defines TFT curricula. In design, the process was meant to position students as early curator: both in the sharing of experiences and also in the design of the videos itself. So too, was I encouraging students to be pedagogically curatorial as I asked them to describe to me the classroom practices they found most valuable which I planned to use as a tool for future lesson-planning.

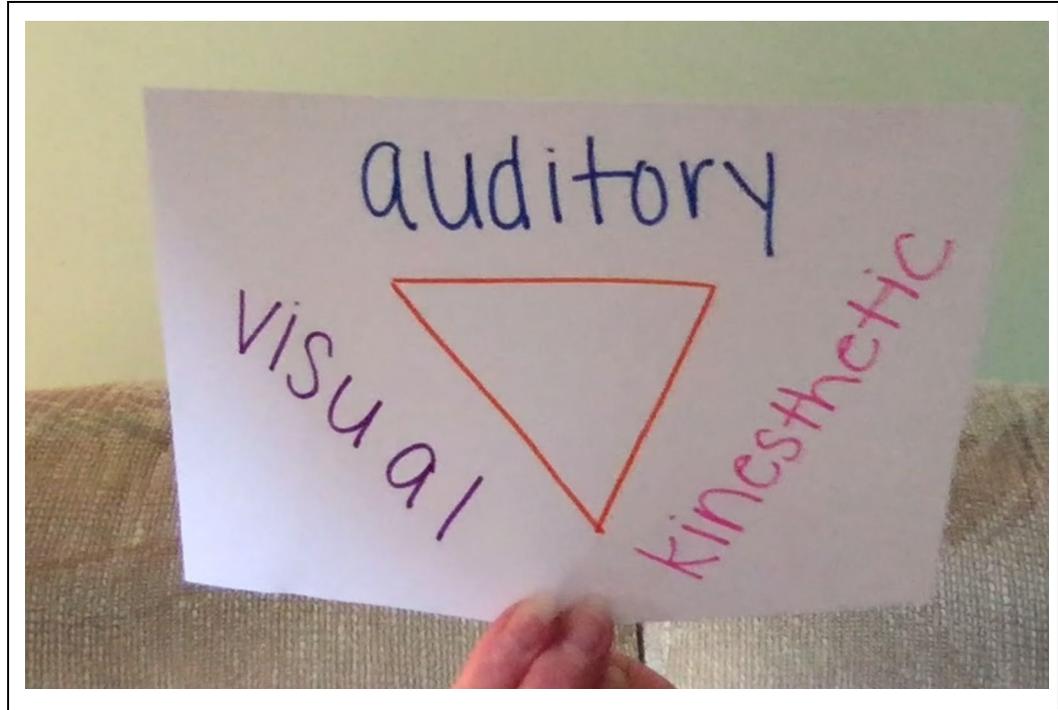


Figure 5: Student uses the Learning Styles to Explain Classroom Practices

The students took to the literacy narrative assignment with varying levels of aplomb; some were excited to explore the shiny new MacBook and iPad they had received,² others were very vocal about their lack of technological know-how. Across both parties a desire to finish the video as quickly...painlessly...as possible was evident. The result: a series of videos that ran the spectrum of creativity.

² All students at Moravian College are given a MacBook Pro and iPad device in their first semester, which they utilize throughout their career at Moravian and ultimately keep upon graduation.

I hoped that these videos provided opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in creative ways throughout the semester. Digital projects, in my mind, should present resources that students can identify as valuable not only to the assignment within which they are tasked with working through them, but also as tools that can be used in the future on other projects as well as components of far transfer.

By normalizing the practice of utilizing recording software and creating video we worked towards breaking down the novelty of the practice as a class. Instead we established video production as a viable way to transmit information, and encouraged each other to think rhetorically about the situations in which this practice is most viable. Holistically, these videos were positioned as opportunities for my students to engage with elements of multimodality as they constructed video responses at points throughout the course.

Sitting in the dark of my office, at an hour when I certainly should have been asleep, I began my student movie-marathon. The videos were fantastic in their own ways. Students described their experiences and, while I had very little expectations for the design elements of the assignment (it was the first week of these students' college careers after all) they consistently provided genuine, reflective, submissions—many of which featured creative elements like graphics, and acting scenes.

I neared the end of my alphabetically organized class roster when I heard the familiar intro song of “The Office” a few clicks into one of my student’s Prezi submissions. Full disclosure: I am a sucker for the show. The student, Beck, had decided to create her own version of the popular show complete with a mock classroom, monologues shot in the same way as the show, and a bunch of helpful and interesting information. It was, and still, is my favorite video and a great example of students utilizing digital formats in ways that are inventive and wholly their own.

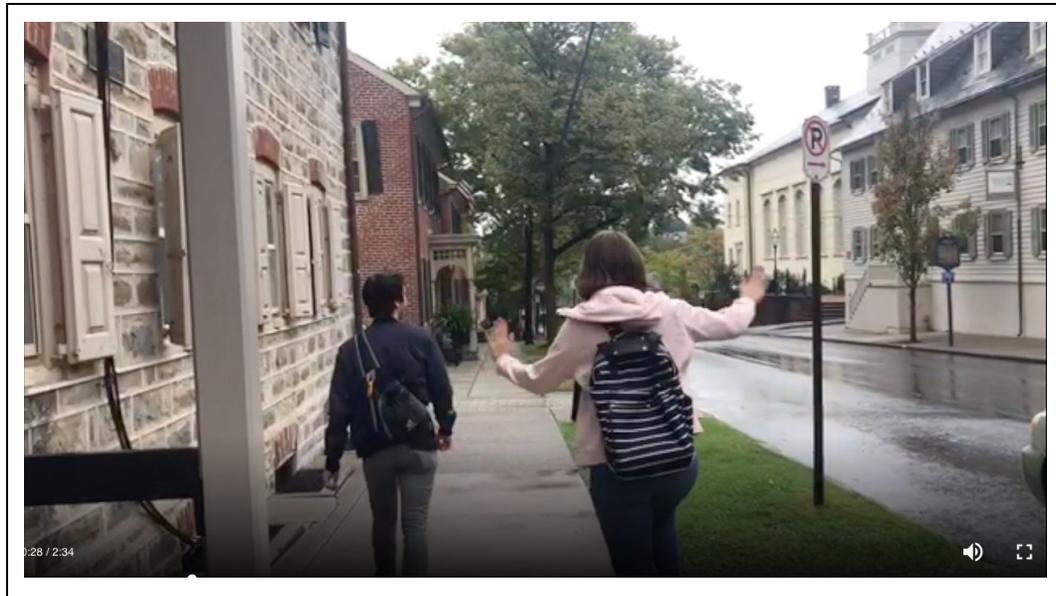


Figure 6: Digital Response Video 1 - Beck

As Daniel Anderson notes in his 2008 article “The Low Bridge to High Benefits: Entry Level Multimedia, Literacies, and Motivation,” introducing and

valuing technologies not only encourages students for “experimentation” but can also serve as the genesis of wholly unexpected learning outcomes as students navigate the unfamiliar (2014, 362-64). Beck’s work on this first project took me by surprise in the best way, and as the course progressed she continued to demonstrate her creativity both in her submitted digital response videos and elsewhere.

In this first iteration of the project my students tackled the videos in ways they saw fit. Some sat behind their webcam; others created skits and acted out different scenarios; a few even enlisted their friends from outside the class to perform. In every instance students played with the framework as Anderson suggests.

Beck and so many others made connections between the demands of LinC 101 J and their experiences outside the classroom. In her case, she made a rhetorically-minded decision that just so happened to feature one of my favorite television shows. This was my response to her submission:

“Beck, I am so unbelievably impressed and happy with your work. I absolutely loved the learning style video (that intro [I love the Office]). Content wise you do such a fantastic job of talking about your experiences. I will do my best to develop visual aids and powerpoint that can assist us as we move forward. I am also glad

that you appreciate peer review opportunities we can scaffold those throughout the semester. Overall, the Prezi is fantastic and I so wish we had decided as a class to share these videos because you set such a fine example here. THANK YOU”

In this instance, we can already see Beck taking the required assignment and making it her own. She made clear rhetorical choices above and beyond the assignment’s direction, and shared elements of her own experience with me as a curator. It was a fantastic start and something I hoped other students would take up as the semester continued as students became more aware of the freedom to make choice they had available. Furthermore, because this process tasked students with thinking metacognitively and using that to create something (as exemplified on Bloom’s revised taxonomy as developing cognitive thinking) I hoped the opportunity to be creative would be even more attractive as the semester progressed.

Curriculum: Delivered, Lived, and Experienced (Week 2)

As we move into the final day of our second week I am greeted with the increasingly familiar faces of our classroom community. Ryan has already, wonderfully, embedded herself into our group as a cheerful confidant—offering to help students with out-of-class questions and connecting with students at her work-study job in Moravian’s Student Union (named the HUB). The classroom

community is becoming more relaxed as a whole—some students have even begun to call me Chris!

Our second week of the semester is dedicated to discussing the introduction to Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle's *Naming What we Know, Classroom Edition: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*. I gave students the weekend to read the preface and introduction, aware that ideas this huge need some time for mulling over and I also asked them a few guiding question:

1) Define threshold concepts.

My students responded in a variety of ways.

Some extensive:

“The definition of threshold concepts are ideas that learners must “see through and see with” in order to participate more fully in particular disciplines. Characteristics that correlate with threshold concepts are troublesome, liminal, integrative and transformative, and probably irreversible. The concepts are ways of seeing and ways of understanding that change a learner’s stance. Threshold concepts help the learner see things differently and make connections across sites and ideas that previously might have seemed unconnected. This not only changes what

people know, but how people know as well. The concepts represent the deep, transformative, foundational learning of disciplines.”

Some concise:

“Threshold concepts are ideas, ways of seeing, ways of understanding that change a learners stance.”

In both instances we see students recognizing the words of Adler-Kassner and Wardle as threshold concepts as a lens through which one can ‘see’ a discipline. My next question, more nuanced, was aimed at having students wrestle with that definition:

2) How do threshold concepts play a role in academic disciplines?

Looking at the same two students and their responses we now see that more nuanced thinking:

Student 1:

“Threshold concepts have played a role in academic disciplines during my high school English classes, and especially with my 11th and 12th grade teachers. During 11th grade my instructor pushed us to write past our comfort zones when forming papers and essays. To be fully challenged, she stressed one should not write on the surface level, as that leads to artificial ways of writing. Instead, one should write in the deep area to

satisfy the requirements of the prompt. Students should not think in just black in white, but in the gray area in order to be immersed in what one is writing about. These tactics do not just apply to writing, but also when reading, annotating and analyzing a piece of work. During 12th grade, my teacher continuously aimed to make connections when reading novels and short stories, writing an essay on a book, and self-reflections. Part of the definition for threshold concepts is to make connections, which was exactly what my endeavors were in my 12th grade English class. Our class would even interlock our hands whenever connections were made to signify the importance of making those lasting and eye-opening influences. Just like threshold concepts, whenever I write an essay, I will try to go past surface level and make connections. Threshold concepts have not just played a role in my English classes, but other academic subjects as well, each requiring deep and transforming learning as a result.”

Student 2:

“They provide a structure through which to understand how learning is organized within higher education. Faculty tend to structure their ideas of learning through threshold concepts which are then woven throughout courses. When students realize the structure of these thresholds they are

able to find a way to make infrastructure more visible and explicit. Grad students have found that these concepts provide a way to think about writing within and across disciplines.”

Threshold concepts as defined by Adler-Kassner and Wardle in the preface of the classroom edition of *Naming What We Know*, “are more than “core” or foundational. They are ideas, ways of seeing, ways of understanding that change a learner’s stance” (Adler-Kassner and Wardle, 2016). These responses (what became a routine practice in the course) were positioned, especially so with *Naming What We Know*, to establish the writerly lexicon that students would employ throughout the rest of the semester and, ideally, in future contexts.

In the first excerpt we see a student applying the concepts of Threshold Concepts to their own academic experiences, in the second an emphasis on effective paraphrasing of the assigned reading itself, as the student works to synthesize a larger section into a brief response. These two samples, along with everyone else’s left me excited to advance into our lesson because they indicated 1) a comprehension of the dense text, 2) an ability to effectively synthesize larger pieces of content in response to a prompted question, and 3) a willingness to

engage in abstracted thinking about complex ideas—which makes up the bulk of *Naming What we Know*.

We began our class by discussing responses on the discussion board, talking about specific points in the text that were particularly enlightening or troublesome, working through the text’s introductory materials methodically—setting the stage for a semester of ideas. We had eased into a subtle monotonous sequence of **presentation slide, instructor provided introduction with related question, student response, repeat** and it wasn’t until we got to talking about curriculum that discussion really began.

In the text’s introduction, Kathleen Blake-Yancey references her 2004 work, “Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key,” to identify the three overlapping curricula which coexist within a given class: a delivered, lived, and experienced curriculum as was outlined on the presentation slide I have included above.

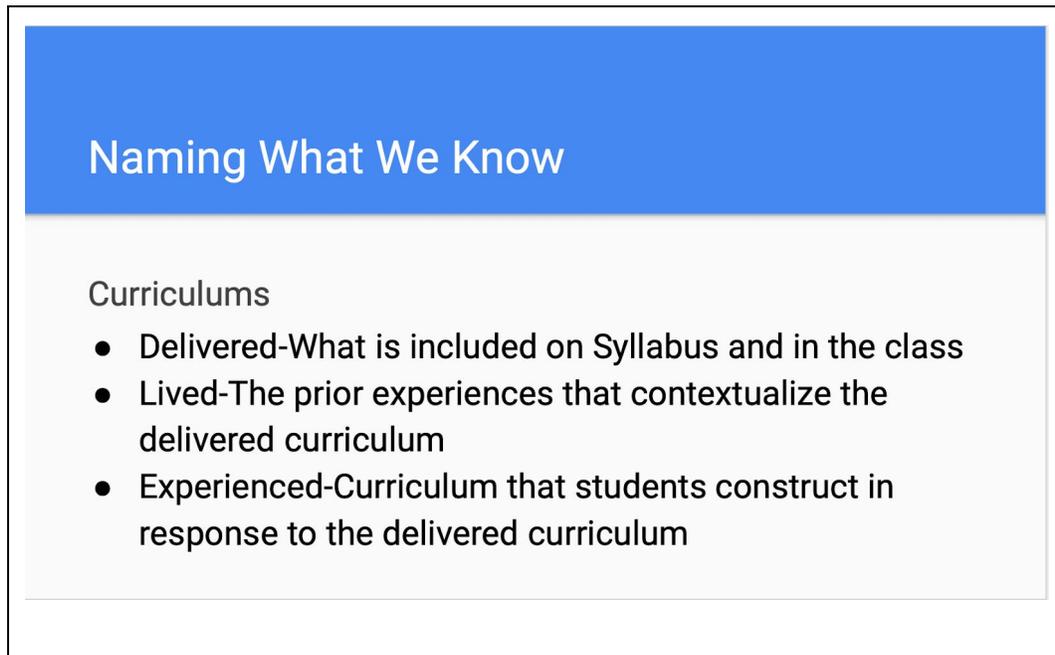


Figure 7: Presentation Slide 9/3/18 Lesson

Standing at the front of the class, three brief definitions at my back, I realized how different my pedagogy was, at least topically, for some students in my class. One such student, Evan, raised a particularly valuable insight,

“So the lived curriculum is basically what we all know from high school, and what we learned them every time we are in the same situations” he asked.

I responded in agreement and the class returned to the methodical discussion that had characterized the lesson until this point. This insight from Evan was an early instance of the TFT curriculum in action: the use of consistent terms—a

component of factual/conceptual knowledge within the course itself—manifesting in an application outside of our course content. If I wanted student transfer, these were the beginnings of it...YAY!

While the class felt successful, it wasn't noteworthy, and as Evan approached from his seat at the back of the class he got my attention with my first name, "hey, Chris" he called. Evan was charismatic and funny, one of the brave few who called me Chris when I insisted in the first week of the course.

"How is it going—do you have a question?" I respond

"Nope, just thinking about how everyone's still calling you Professor Hassay, it's because we have called every teacher Mr. or Mrs. before college"

It explained quite a lot really, and from that helpful insight I came into class Wednesday with assurances that Chris was my preferred title. The informality slowly set in as students reconciled their lived curriculums with this novel concept, and if it wasn't for Evan's silent pondering at the back of the class perhaps some students still would be starting their emails with "Mr. Hassay."

Write, right? RIGHT! (Week 3)

The first time I asked the class to write reflectively they didn't realize exactly what it was that I wanted them to do. We were still early on in the semester, my nerves had disappeared like the water stain on the ceiling. We were

in full swing (by that I mean a majority of students had begun calling me Chris, recognizing where homework and course announcement were posted online, and productively talking about college-level academic writing). Students had already begun reflectively composing, again working towards the building of metacognitive knowledge in the taxonomy, when I had asked them to submit their first digital response video in which they critically analyzed their own learning (see Surprise Sitcom), but in this instance I was asking them to compose reflections detailing the rhetorical choices made in their work. These types of reflections served as spaces to seek out the connections between reflection and transfer and culminate in the form of an extended writing journal as outlined in the TFT curriculum (Beaufort, 2016; Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, 2014).

We were ready to begin diving head first into a series of content that I thought would be particularly relevant. They had just completed some drafts of emails for their first writing assignment aptly titled “Composing Effective Emails.” Email writing in this assignment helped make rhetorical situations very clear (as they were listed and realized in student writing), and ultimately invited students to respond to different audiences in a relatively brief manner.

I opened the course with a series of questions aimed at metacognition:

For each email answer the following:

- *What email prompt have you selected?*

- *What are the specifics of your email?*
- *What components of this email do you feel most confident in?*
 - *What are you concerned about with your writing?*
- *Explain your composing process to complete this assignment.*

I was greeted by bewildered faces....

[Time elapses—perhaps minutes]

Nevertheless, I pressed onwards...or didn't. More accurately I waited quietly at the front of the room for my students to write. I was hoping to have a discussion with the class before separating them into small groups for our first peer revision (another practice I planned to implement frequently).

The assignment tasked students with writing a series of emails for various situations they could find themselves on campus: an email to the registrar regarding a mistake on a course schedule, to a coach explaining a missed practice, to a potential employer to schedule an interview. Each prompt carried with it a specific rhetorical situation, and through this process not only could I invite students to practice extensively in a genre (each student was tasked with writing four emails) but also I could allow students to experiment with writing to different audiences and see how that impacted their writing. What's more I also could let students select, themselves, which of the prompts they chose. Some students selected email for the class that they actually needed to send in order to make sure

they were polished. For one particular students, Sarah, an email she was workshopping she later sent to me!

I stood at the front of the class listening to the subtle scratch of pencils, the tapping of fingers on new MacBook keyboards. A hand hung in the air like a spire, beaming from the back row like a lighthouse. Guiding me.

“You want us to write?...Yeah?...We write, right?” calls forward H from the back of the class.

I didn’t know it yet but H was a funny guy and a fantastic student—prone, especially so, to asking the questions that everyone else needed answers to but were too afraid to ask.

“Well yeah, respond to the questions that are posted on the discussion board; we will talk as a group about them.” I respond.

Suddenly, a burst of activity, students who were once scribbling flipped their pencils over, backspace tabs were held down, others furiously began tapping the keys or penning on unmarked sheets of white lined notebook paper. It seemed whatever I had *thought* was sufficient explanation was not, and without this very important question most of my students would have been doing something outside of what I expected.

What followed was a very satisfactory bit of peer review, some nice discussion, and a particularly valuable set of responses in which reviewers noted:

- 1. Provide one piece of public, helpful praise of a draft that you read. Name the writer and the draft prompt as well as what was effective.*
- 2. List one change or piece of helpful criticism you received and discuss how that will inform your revision of this draft and your drafting of the following two .*
- 3. Reflect on the peer review experience? Were you a helpful peer reviewer, in what ways?*

I was pleased but in my notes for the day I wrote H's question down verbatim. 1) because it was easy enough to remember, and, 2) because it made me realize the difference between explicit instruction and vague direction.

In the weeks that followed I would come to learn that H was interested in sports, didn't know what he would like to study, was a commuter student and that he was generally a fantastic student and a pleasure to have in class. I will always remember him by that first question though and what it represented. H was straightforward-a relative barometer for the class' understanding and as the semester progressed...If H had a question, it was best just to answer loud enough for everyone to hear!

Reading, Reading, Reading (Weeks 4-5)

“When I pick this one up, I just want to throw it against the wall,” Nick's discontent was both humorous and sincere, ringing across the classroom and quickly followed by a few quiet laughs and nods of agreement. Our course text:

Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies is what he wanted to throw, and by the fourth week of the semester students were intimately familiar with the difficulty of course readings.

I assigned two textbooks for the course: John C. Bean's *Reading Rhetorically* and the classroom edition of Linda-Adler Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle's *Naming What we Know* along with the subtle sprinkling (at times heavy peppering) of outside readings into the course. All of which I collected responses for in the discussion boards posted each class.

My students were tired of them, certainly so, and Nick was speaking for the rest of the class that day also. It was week 5 and at a point in the semester typified most directly with readings and discussion. We were pushing into the second and third threshold concepts as well as reading supplemental texts about discursive exchange.

I have chosen to include this book-throwing quote for multiple reasons: 1) I think it may just be one of the funniest parts of my observational field notes; 2) I think his description perfectly encapsulates who this student is as a person and also their feelings towards the text; 3) it spawned a ton of dialogue from other students which (while not as notable) definitely helped me understand the classroom community's thoughts; and 4) it marked a turning point in my narrative where I changed the ways I was assigning course readings (essentially a major

part of my curation) to better meet the needs of my students. Many students echoed this sentiment and it stemmed from the density of the text and the time it took students to read a specific threshold concept. At the time I was also assigning some VERY difficult supplemental readings which led to some students not engaging and many more students reporting that they were confused.

As I respond to my students I think to another assigned reading, one that I had hoped would quickly become a student favorite mainly because it was *my* favorite when I first read it. Anne Freadman's "Anyone for Tennis" a fantastic piece of braided ideas regarding genre, discursive practice, and the ways in which we can productively orient discourse through a series of guiding metaphors like a game of tennis (Freadman, 1994). This reading is challenging—I knew that going in. Until this point I had been assigning difficult readings, my syllabus was a proverbial minefield of confusion. I began to conflate what I found as particularly interesting with what would help my students understand. At its core, I wanted my students to begin to wrestle with ideas of rhetorical situation, genre, discourse community, and the ways in which writing mediated the college campus through academic disciplines. What I created however was something far different and it took Nick's declaration to help me realize it.

I asked my students abstracted questions about specific details in the Freadman's work:

“In the section Place and Function Freadman writes, "To understand the rules of the genre is to know when and where it is appropriate...." (59). In what ways does place influence genre as both a consideration and a function?”

My students responded:

“When sharing your ideas within a certain place, it is important to note what audience will read your text and how their, probably, well-based opinions, views, and interpretations look at it and perceive it. For instance, it may be inappropriate to place a Republican article in a liberal newspaper. Also the method you use, whether that be online or on a physical newspaper, can also play a role in how the audience perceives your message. For instance, if you print your article in a newspaper it may not reach a certain place or demographic, since they may not even read newspapers. If you want to grab your intended audience, it is important to consider the genre and how it is functioning as the path to guiding your audience to your meaning.”

Clearly, they were engaging with the readings, and the responses they were producing were fantastic, but up to this point I had been doing a crummy job of recognizing it. We worked through texts at breakneck pace, consistently introducing new ideas, problematizing previous readings with new concepts,

applying frameworks from one text onto another. I had lost sight of those students in my course who were lost.

After learning that students were dissatisfied with *Naming What We Know* it was tough for me to reconcile with the syllabus as I had written it. Particularly the schedule of reading that I had created. If my course was to truly be dedicated to issues of student voice and agency, how could I continue to demand my students read things that they themselves were either confused with or not finding valuable? I began to reconceptualize the reading demands of the course by first slowing down, providing more time for in-class discursive practices through things like the online discussion board software Padlet, and trying to be more mindful about curating readings that students found valuable and were appropriate for my audience of first-semester Freshman.

Moving forward I recognized that if I wanted students to read dense text I needed to better manage the amount of expected pages. In addition, I also recognized that my discussion board question needed to not be specifically tied to components of the readings but rather the larger ideas at play so I could use student responses as formative assessment points. In the end, this got me thinking more directly about this idea of engagement vs. compliance and understanding that just having my students read dense text but not find any value in it was, in fact, an anaesthetic experience.

Public Speaking (Week 5-6)

Across the course I tried my best to hold true to the tenets of curatorial teaching, to providing my students opportunities to curate components of the educational experience for the classroom. At first, choice was scaffolded: students got to select their prompts from a number of options during the Composing an Effective email assignment, I asked them to share their stories in the digital response video, I often developed classroom activities and created discussion boards around connecting our course readings to other courses and experiences outside of our course (which I also hoped would help students transfer this knowledge into new contexts), but when we moved into public speaking during the fifth week I truly felt confident that the class would feature meaningful choice.

I started the unit on public speaking with some readings and concept introduction. Components of factual and procedural knowledge that I was introducing to students like tone, vocal variety, pacing and other components of our Teaching for Transfer discourse that I was reiterating like rhetorical situation, audience, and rhetorical appeal. I reminded students of an activity called “Appeals in Action” where they had mapped the rhetorical appeals made by Queen Elizabeth in her Speech to the Troops at Tilbury when I talked about the ways in which one can organize a presentation (procedural knowledge).

Appeals in Action

Highlight appeals to ethos, logos, and pathos using your groups selected color-be prepared to explain your rationale.

ETHOS

LOGOS

PATHOS

Queen Elizabeth's Speech to the Troops at Tilbury:

We have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people (GREEN). Let tyrants fear, I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know

Figure 8: Appeals in Action Assignment

I closed the first class of the unit with a homework assignment: share with me three speech topics of your choice. Simple enough and my students responded with topics ranging the map from pop culture, to politics, to hobbies I was pleased and so were they, I would imagine, considering it was a relatively easy assignment!

What they did not expect, however was that those topics were randomly to be assigned in the following class for 5/1 presentations. The 5/1 presentation was a brief classroom practice meant to develop students communicative skill set and comfort speaking publicly by tasking them with developing a 1 minute presentation in 5 minutes. By the time the awkward laughter had passed we got started.

5/1's were certainly an interesting first step, but the truly curatorial component of the unit came in the second round of presentations in which students were asked to make a 5 minute informative and or persuasive presentation about a topic of their choice. The public speaking practice wasn't welcomed universally, surely, but by the time we had moved into these presentations students were more comfortable and confident at the front of the room. The expectations were clearly listed:

Purpose: To deliver an informative or persuasive presentation about a selected topic.

Genre: 3-5 Minute Presentation

Audience: Your Instructor/Classroom Community

Expectation:

- 30 seconds-1 minute of time at the conclusion of the presentation for questions and responses.
- At least 4 different sources referenced with appropriate attribution
- A set of at least 3 presentation slides to accompany your discussion.
- Considerations to the elements of effective public speaking (tone, vocal variety, pacing, volume, pitch etc.)

INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING

- Informal volunteering is “ unpaid, voluntary work/ volunteering not coordinated by an organization or institution.”



Revive & Thrive Project
<http://www.reviveandthriveproject.com/volunteer/>



Dovia LA
<http://doviala.org/2014/04/21/informal-volunteering-and-time-banks/>



Volunteer Scotland
<http://innovation-web02.dc2.iomarthosting.com/policy-and-research/research/>

Figure 9: Volunteering Presentation

Many students decided to focus on one of the topics they had first submitted for homework and while I had scaffolded the writing process into the course via a submitted presentation outline and set of slides many students went about the assignment in ways they saw fit. Not only was this their first true inquiry project, but as they sought out information related to their topics they also built important genre and procedural knowledge throughout. A particularly strong presentation focused on the importance of volunteering, which was filled with emotional appeals to pathos, fantastic images, and excellent rationale—all effective applications of course content onto student-curated materials.

Disciplinary Writing Analysis-Week 6 - 8 9

The use of generalized assessment criteria in writing, while popularized by the AACU, has become a frequently critiqued element of writing assessment in the field of rhetoric and writing studies. Most notably a piece written by Chris Anson, Deanna P. Dannels, Pamela Flash, and Amy Housley Gaffney (2012) highlighted the connections between generic assessment strategies and misplaced assessment foci. This ultimately leads to inauthentic assessments that students do not value and that make instructor assessment less specific to the needs of the course (2012). When I began my course I didn't bring much with me by way of actual assessment tools, moreso an idea of what I didn't want to do, and, for the most part, that gave me the freedom to design narrative rubrics around what I did value for each assignment, without feeling like I was using a metric that didn't really look to the specifics of my teaching practice (see: delivered curriculum).

I used assessment strategies in my course informed by Brian Huot and Peggy O'Neil's *Assessing Writing: A Critical Sourcebook* (2009). Specifically, narrative rubrics that provide spaces for students to aid in the development of the rubric itself (Huot & O'Neil, 2009; Gallagher, 2011). Within the curatorial model, inviting students to contribute to rubric designs not only makes the assessments more meaningful to the students but also mitigates issues of assessment illiteracy in the classroom.

By the time I got to the second major assignment of the course, a generic criticism of academic genres I called a “Disciplinary Writing Analysis” I was already somewhat dissatisfied with what I *thought* would be positive and accurate assessment through narrative rubric. Instead I found myself all too often struggling to neatly place students into different statements and levels of success without feeling as though they were somewhat misrepresenting what I felt was my own thoughts on the piece. This led to me leaving tons of comments and notes in addition to the actual rubrics themselves—overloading students with a deluge of comments, collectively forming a confusing mass of text.

Writing Conventions	3 – Proficient Outcome (A – B+)
<p><i>Rhetorical Negotiation of PURPOSE & AUDIENCE</i></p> <p><i>The written text</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effectively expresses the writer’s purpose (which is to develop an insightful generic analysis of a selected subset of scholarship produced in rhetoric and writing studies). • effectively addresses the listed audience, a member of the given discourse community. <p>>>> Readers are definitely persuaded to consider the text’s analytical ideas.</p>
<p>ORGANIZATION/LOGIC</p> <p><i>Given the purpose and audience, the written text</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employs a logically beneficial arrangement of ¶s • employs a logically beneficial arrangement of ideas within paragraphs with appropriate section headings • employs effective introduction and conclusion. • employs research question/thesis statement that effectively organizes and focuses the entirety of the paper. <p>>>>The organizational logic enhances a reader’s understanding of the text’s ideas.</p>
<p>DEVELOPMENT</p> <p><i>Given the purpose and audience, the written text</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides a detailed and valuable description of the social context within which the selected rhetorical artifacts exist • Provides substantial and meaningful descriptions of the substantive and stylistic elements of each artifact. • Effectively intertwines evidence from all research sources in ways that enhance argument and provide an informative backbone to the writing.
<p>WRITER’S ETHOS</p> <p><i>Given the purpose and audience, the written text employs a textual voice that</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates a confident and authoritative understanding of the findings presented. • demonstrates personal engagement with the content (via the writer’s ideas, values, beliefs). <p>>>>Readers perceive this textual voice as trustworthy.</p>
<p>READABILITY, ACADEMIC HONESTY, AND FAIR USE</p> <p><i>Given the purpose and audience, the written text</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contains few or no errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation or sentence structure. • employs thorough and polished modified parenthetical citation & References List/Works Cited for all sources and artifacts

Figure 10: Disciplinary Writing Analysis Narrative Rubric Proficient

This assignment’s design wasn’t ideal either, as my students weren’t aware of the expectations of the genre, or had enough discourse community knowledge to really navigate the experience well. I had tasked them with

identifying academic discourse written within the field of Writing Studies and conducting generic criticisms on artifacts they had found. At the time, I believed that not restricting the students with many parameters would work well, but as I alluded to, this meant that my assessment, and ultimately my communication of the the assignment's expectations to students, were amorphous and confusing.

To introduce generic criticism we conducted mini-analyses: first on Disney Movies, then on rubrics from the students courses; we read Rachel Lewis' chapter "Genre Analysis" as well as excerpts from Sonja Foss' *Rhetorical Criticism*; I held conferences with students and set aside class sessions for facilitated peer-review but still my students struggled. After my students submitted their analyses they completed a final reflection:

Student:

Once I began I gather a plethora of articles, which did not match whatsoever and contained various different topics, so then I started over. I then gathered three artifacts, making sure that they were all a part of the "Rhetoric Review" journal article genre, which was helpful especially since I chose to do generic participation. I then decided to look through the artifacts, noting the content, similarities, and differences in terms of situation, substantive, and stylistic elements, keeping the conventions the "Rhetoric Review" laid out in the back of my mind. Honestly I got a lot of

valuable information and was able to learn about each journal article, noting how they were alike and how they were different. Then I sat down for a good amount of my Monday on Fall Break and just wrote, gathering other sources, like Sonja Foss's text, the MLA article I used to support one of my claims, among other things. I also had to learn how to cite in APA, which is a style I have never used before, which was daunting. The process went very well, but there was definitely bumps along the way.

Having to start the research process over is certainly not ideal, and considering this was one of the strongest students in the class clearly I could have done a better job outlining what exactly I was expecting.

Looking back now I realize that the issue stemmed from my own inability to clearly articulate assessment expectations, and how those expectations ran parallel to the samples that I was providing students. The project took a week longer than I had expected and as I moved into the final third of the course I was looking for a change—what I had hoped would be an important assignment demonstrating a practice that students would transfer both into their final project and in future contexts felt like a failure.

Returning to Form (Week 10)

Fast forward to late October, to the tenth week of the course—I am down and I can feel my emotion as a byproduct of our larger classroom community. The

disciplinary writing analyses were still quite good, no thanks to my poor scaffolding, but even the community doesn't feel very curatorial. That assignment, I had hoped, would be a merging of my own academic interests and discourse community with student's interest to read. Instead it just felt like a confusing process that only I understood and that I couldn't communicate to students. We are at the point in the syllabus where the third video is on the horizon.

A group of students decide to recreate the class itself as their response to my prompted questions about how their group would complete the courses final independent research project, *Discovering a Discipline*,³ complete with a sunglass wearing instructor—by this point my *apparently* frequent sunglass-wearing had come to epitomize my identity in the classroom. It was rhetorically savvy, answered the questions I had prompted, and was FUNNY.⁴ I ended up showing the class the video as a segway into conversations about collaboration.

Overall, the digital response videos served many purposes. Not only did they help my students wrestle with elements of design, inviting them to make rhetorical choices related to the specific prompts attached to each video, but also they allowed students to develop ownership of the content. Not only were they

³ Digital Response Video 3

⁴ Let the record show I can take a joke.

frequently explaining concepts in their own words they were creating videos that they valued, in response to and often informed by many of the texts that they had encountered both in the class and outside of it. As compositionist Jody Shipka notes:

“our courses need to do more to bridge the gap between the texts and practices typically associated with the composition (or writing) classroom and the various other texts and practices students experience beyond the space of the classroom” (Shipka, 2014, 212).

Powerful Peer Review (Week 11)

One of my favorite practices in Choose Your Own Adventure was collaborative writing and peer review. Aside from the final project of the course being completed in groups of three, students engaged in peer review experiences on every major project of the course and by the time we reached Discovering a Discipline engaging in moments of peer review had become routine practice.

In a study conducted by Neil and Pamela Flash (2014) ,who studied 257 undergraduate students in a Greenhouse Management course, they noted that peer-review both engaged developing writers and provided a real secondary audience beyond the instructor (Neil & Flash, 2014). In my own context, I found that peer review was something that students enjoyed, perhaps because these sessions were perceived as opportunities to do homework in class. Considering

that student final grades in Greenhouse Management courses that featured peer-review led to as high as a .33 increase in final grade as compared to non-peer-reviewed iterations of the same course, I was more than happy to allow my students to get their *perceived* jump start (Neil & Flash, 2014).

It was a Friday which meant the first floor of Comenius hall was relatively empty except for our class. I had been scheduling activities on Fridays since the research project started that took advantage of the extra space, encouraging my students to spread out and work in their small research groups. Our classroom, the room across the hall, and the chapel at the end of the hallway were all common venues for Friday work sessions. This, of course, placed some additional demands on my student assistant, Ryan, and I, who moved from space to space to offer support. My students were fantastic on these days, making progress on their research, asking insightful questions about their methodologies, and, of course, goofing off just a bit.

After dulling down a series of conversations across different students in the class, stacked on top of one another into a cacophonous, indiscernible shape I began the class:

“Today we are going to workshop our interview questions”

I was greeted with silence, if anyone had been following the syllabus and listening to me in class for the last week they would have known this before

coming to class today. I had been reminding students relentlessly both verbally and through a series of scaffolded readings and assignments positioned to make sure that every group would have something to workshop. Groups had read some articles and chapters about conducting good research, researched some potential interviewees, identified and contacted a person of interest (with an effectively written email!), and developed a detailed research dossier about them to ask targeted questions based on their work. Two groups to each room, I asked the students to begin mock interviews across research teams. I wanted research teams to share their research dossiers with one another and use the information in the dossiers as a guide so that they could act as if they were, in fact, the person the group wanted to interview. Asking students to read descriptions of interviewees, many of whom were professors on campus, and pretend to be them for a different group's interview

What began as awkward silences and nervous laughs became ironic renditions of interview questions coupled with dry responses. Soon, however, groups became more comfortable (did I mention my students were awesome) and my shifting of spaces was accompanied by a new host of interesting and insightful critiques offered from one student to another.

Students were expected to conduct interviews with a member of their selected discipline and these peer review sessions, for some, would be the only

time they spoke their questions aloud beforehand—hearing a question aloud does wonders for thinking about how an audience will interpret it. Armed with dossiers of research about their interviewee they informed the recipient of their questions who they should be emulating and moved from there. The chapel cohort decided to take it a step further however, and before long the space was filled with the echoes of all six voices as they began workshopping and actively rewriting their questions.

This metacognitive work in tandem with written reflection where students are asked to justify their own rhetorical choices helps foster transfer while also working towards Dewey's conception of aesthetic experience (Dewey, 1938; Wardle, 2007; Beames, Klenowski, & Lloyd 2010). In summation, classroom practices peer-review, and reflective writing are meant to both foster transfer centric learning while also fitting within a larger inquiry model making them easy additions to my course design.

Inquiry (Weeks 12-14)

The Discovering a Discipline Assignment makes up the final third of the course and is meant to engage students in an open study of a department on campus. The idea behind this is that it allows these students an opportunity to explore a potential area of future study that might interest them. Speaking from personal experience, I wasn't exactly sure what I wanted to major in as a

Freshman, and having to make that choice generated a lot of anxiety and undue stress. Looking back, I think that was because I didn't fully understand the options that were available to me—essentially, I didn't have more than a vague understanding of any majors because I hadn't really done any significant research into them. This assignment gives first-year students the chance to really look beyond the topical information that so often decides a student's major to the more innate and fundamental components of the discipline as a whole. This 'deep dive' is fostered through analysis of student writing, analyzing disciplinary scholarship, and reading course materials from corresponding classes within the major. As students go through the scaffolded methodology of the project, they will be able to uncover, synthesize, and ultimately respond to the new information they are generating for themselves, and even more so, for each other, as they amass this large research base and share their findings with one another. The hope is that this project can allow students to utilize the frameworks we have established in the class (preempting the assignment) while also learning more about the different departments across campus.

Because the project necessitates a significant amount of research as well as requires a written analysis of 8-10 pages and a presentation, I think having students work collaboratively in groups of up to 3 not only makes this more manageable in the student's eyes, but it also hones the collaborative skill sets that

are invaluable in academic and professional settings. Krista Kennedy's and Rebecca Moore Howard's (2014) "Collaborative Writing, Print to Digital" highlights the importance of setting the stage for collaboration. They advocate collaborative writing be a concept introduced early in the course, but that fostering collaborative practice should be delayed until the students begin to understand not only the course itself but also their fellow classmates. I planned to foster what Kennedy and Moore describe as dialogic collaboration in which students work collaboratively on all aspects of the project because I believe it will ask more of the students in terms of engagement (39-40). The project requires all group members be engaged together, it is impossible to break up the work into component parts (hierarchical collaboration) which I believe will also create more thoughtful work overall.

Looking at the logistics of the assignment, each week of the course is designed to have students engage in a component of the research process. As we have discussed, allowing students the agency to choose their disciplines remains an essential tenet of this assignment, but creating a schedule for their research is something that is important to ensure that no groups fall behind due to lack of planning on their behalf. The tasks that students will be doing within this project have all been fostered throughout the year: emailing, scheduling, and connecting with departmental stakeholders-Composing an Effective Email; interviewing a

member of your selected department- interview sessions fostered in class;
disciplinary scholarship analysis-course readings and Digital Response Videos;
writing an academic analysis-Departmental Writing Analysis; creating and
delivering a Discovering a Discipline presentation-the art of public speaking
course sequence. The students will already be familiar with the processes
expected of them within this project and they will be expected to apply those
previously developed proficiencies with greater effectiveness in this new (more
student-driven) research role.

This assignment sheet is targeted towards the final written submission, the
Departmental Findings report in which students are tasked with constructing an
informative analysis of their targeted department. What this really is, as is the
case with the WEC findings reports, is a piece that makes claims and then
substantiates those claims with evidence. As such, I believe it fits well within the
overall outcome #1 of FYWS courses as well.

Discovering a Discipline (Weeks 15 - 16)

My gripes with assessment hadn't subsided as I approached the final
project of the course for which the course was named: Discovering a Discipline.
Discovering a Discipline is a student-driven research project in which students are
invited to select a discipline of interest and tasked with analyzing the written

materials produced by that discourse community ultimately developing a written report of their findings.

This assignment was designed in response to knowledge gaps of first-generation college students and is meant to engage students in an immersive inquiry process built within Rhetorical Genre Theory. This kind of ethnographic research project is recognized within the field of Rhetoric and Writing studies as fostering important understandings about and within genres themselves (Chapman, 1999; Devitt, Bawarshi, & Reiff, 2003). For researchers Amy Devitt, Anis Bawarshi, and Mary Jo Reiff this work is extremely valuable:

Using ethnography in the classroom would...have students learn one research genre (ethnography), while they simultaneously use ethnographic techniques to learn about and through other genres. As a result, incorporating ethnography into the classroom...[gives] students access to the material practices of both the classroom community and communities beyond the classroom. (2003, 555)

Taken together, this assignment is aware of issues of equity (Freire), tied to experiential learning (Dewey), and fostered through Rhetorical Genre Theory. Further it allows students to recognize that as a capstone assignment this piece works not only towards what is classified as meaningful writing in relation to the work of Eodice, Geller, and Lerner, but also towards transfer as they develop an

understanding of both genre conventions of their selected discipline as well as an understanding of the research practices needed to conduct this research again as they engage with new discourse communities in the future. Clearly not the easiest to create a narrative rubric for...

A week before the project began I flew to Louisville Kentucky to talk about my course design and research at the twelfth biennial Watson Conference. It was the first presentation of the course design and while I should have been excited, much of my time in Louisville however was spent wondering how I could design a narrative rubric that worked for the multitude of options available to students in their projects. Ryan was overseeing the formation of groups in my absence, and I knew that when I came back the expectation would be for another exhaustive assignment sheet filled with detail—something my students loathed and loved in equal measures.

As I flipped through the pages of the spiral bound conference program I came across a concurrent session that seemed of particular interest: Burn Your Rubric: Fanning the Flames of Failure. Further still I noticed a particular presentation within that concurrent session that spoke to me on a personal level:

*A Clusterfuck of Motives: Rubrics, Best Intentions, and Curved Shower
Curtain Rods - Bump Halbritter, Michigan State University*

Perhaps it was the profanity that caught my attention, perhaps the reference to the same type of bathroom feature that I had interacted with so many times in my life, more likely (at least I hope) I was drawn to the idea of assessment overhaul.

Bump and the rest of the panelists advocated for competency-based assessments that could serve as points of security for students in terms of assessment but also window of opportunity for feedback. By using competencies you could reward students for taking risks with their writing (even if those risks didn't work out as well as they/you had hoped) and provide the same kinds of meaningful feedback you would have with a different form of assessment.

I returned to Moravian prepared to turn my assessment practice on its head. Providing students with a competency based grading system in tandem with the narrative rubric I generated in an effort to provide students with the space to define their own success (competency) while still working towards what I found most important in their writing. Rather than providing a few, large narrative rubrics, I separated different elements of the process and made them competency based. This allowed me to recognize group progress and provide feedback more frequently. Feedback that referenced the ultimate narrative rubric which made up the final assessment on the project. In the end, I was left with a combination that I finally felt satisfied with.

Finishing Happy

As the semester came to a close and my final grades were submitted two students came to my office one final time before Winter Break. I had just finished what I would call an assessment tour de force—six groups having submitted research reports ranging from 22-35 pages each in the final three days between when they were due and when my final grades needed to be submitted—needless to say I was a little tired. Amidst my delirium, Beck and one of her research partners entered my room. They had written one of the better research reports, received an A on the assignment (and in the class respectively), and were generally delightful all semester. We exchanged casual conversation, I responded to their questions regarding the assignment, and as Beck left she provided one last data point.

“Thank you for the class,” she said, “I truly feel that I developed as a writer because of this class.”

With that my semester ended—I scrawled it across the back of a piece of lightly used scratch paper: the final additional to my observational field log.

DATA ANALYSIS

Across the semester I had been diligent, to the best of my ability, in the collection of qualitative data which now comprises the bulk of data analysis included below. Admittedly, much of my data was provided immediately by students as components of their participation in the course. More specifically, almost all of my dataset is comprised of student work and teaching materials with my own observational notes supplementing this data. My coding process looked at the student submissions as well as my own production as artifacts to be analyzed for practices both displayed by students and myself throughout the semester.

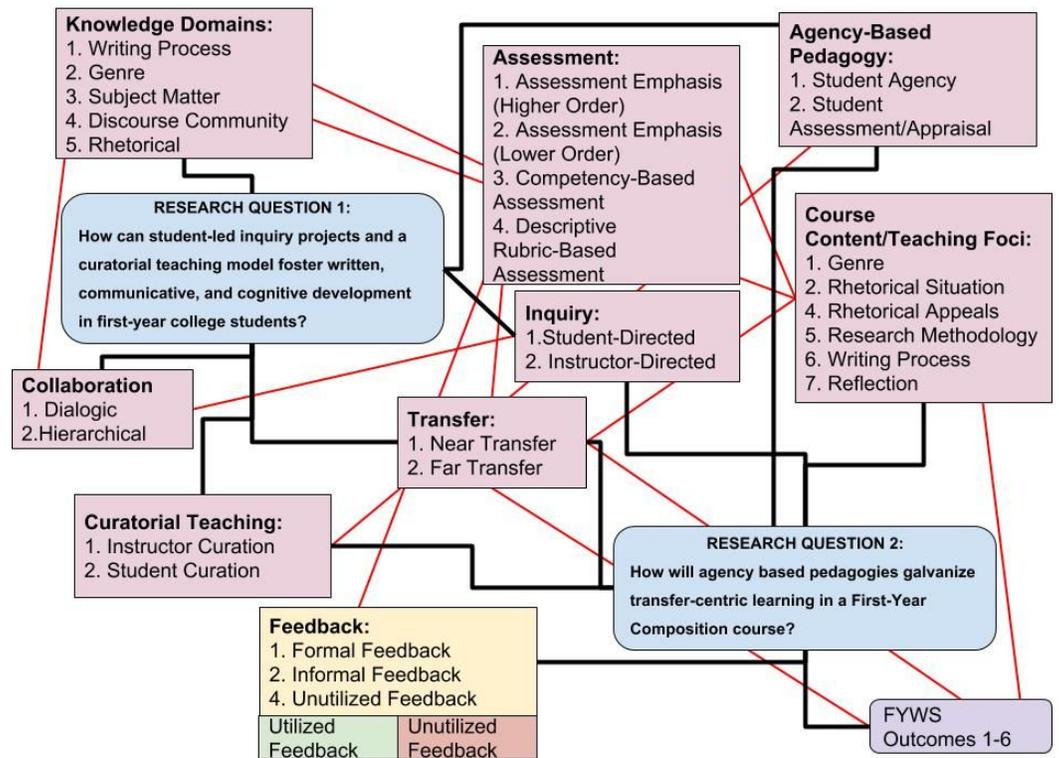


Figure 11: Coding Graphic Organizer

Pictured above is a graphic organizer of the coding process I underwent following the conclusion of the semester. As is almost immediately obvious, it is dense, complex, and while I have organized various codes into relatively discrete bins many of them run parallel and intersect in interesting ways. The complex network of black connections of bins to my research questions as well as red connections

which connect bins to one another tell, perhaps visually, first how interconnected much of this work is; I hoped that my course would respond to the unfortunate figures that began my literature review from the NSSE, and I also hoped that in keeping with the goals of the FYWS program as well as the fundamental tenets of the Teaching for Transfer Curriculum I could create aesthetic learning experiences for students that would be applicable in contemporary and future contexts.

In the pages that follow I will explore a number of the bins listed above, making note of when and how those codes were used in my larger dataset and prompting questions that I have discovered after conducting analysis on this early set of data. Listed, too, are a series of coding bins which I have not yet been able to discover in my data with any great regularity, but that serve as points of future inquiry which I will detail further in my “What’s Next” Section.

Research Population

Overall 13 (72.2%) of the students in Choose Your Own Adventure provided consent to have their work be analyzed. As I mentioned in my methodology, I had taken steps to ensure that all research practices were first and foremost classroom practices with which all students engage (which I believed allowed me to better serve my students as a whole). Furthermore, because I was actively keeping logs of my observations and interactions with all students in these ways, I also was

unaware who provided consent to be a part of the study—something I noted earlier in my Trustworthiness Statement. Ultimately this meant that I discovered which data was valid as the semester came to a close, after I had submitted grades, which helped me first organize what my overall dataset would/could look like. From there, I was able to actively think about the population that had provided consent and think of ways to productively scaffold my reporting from that subgroup of Choose Your Own Adventure.

For the purposes of this study I have chosen to focus my analysis on a select group of students in keeping with the work of Elizabeth Wardle (2007) in her piece “Understanding ‘Transfer’ from FYC: Preliminary Results of a Longitudinal Study” which outlined the first 2 years of a study following 7 of her students. Warlde writes,

“As the project progressed I continually analyzed both student writing and interview/focus group transcripts. I coded the transcripts for themes stemming from my research questions, categorized the student writing according to genre and purpose, and compared student comments about the writing to the writing itself.”

In my own study I hope to emulate these practices, first utilizing the student writing I have collected from my own course in tandem with my own

observations, but ultimately utilizing materials from future courses in tandem with a survey in consecutive years with students.

Assessment

Code/Definition
Assessment emphasis (higher order) Assessment of organization, development of ideas, command of information, use of effective sources etc.
Assessment emphasis (lower order) Assessment of grammar, structure, readability, formatting, correctness of citation, project completion etc. or appropriate conventions in multimodal submissions
Competency-Based Assessment Assessment that focused on students' completion of a set of listed criteria constituting competencies
Descriptive Rubric-Based Assessment Assessment that focused on students' achievement of a series of descriptive statements describing various levels of success within specific assessment criteria

I noted instances of assessment early on in my coding, of course, because they are produced by me (making them a particularly obvious coding avenue!) and provide interesting, course-long pools of data for each student. For the purposes of this study, I defined assessment as any instance in which I provided analytical responses to students that directly impacted their course grades. Over the course of the semester I provided assessments on just under 600 (n=594) instances across both larger assignments that carried with them narrative rubric based assessment (n=13) and competency-based assessments (n=19).

Assessment Types

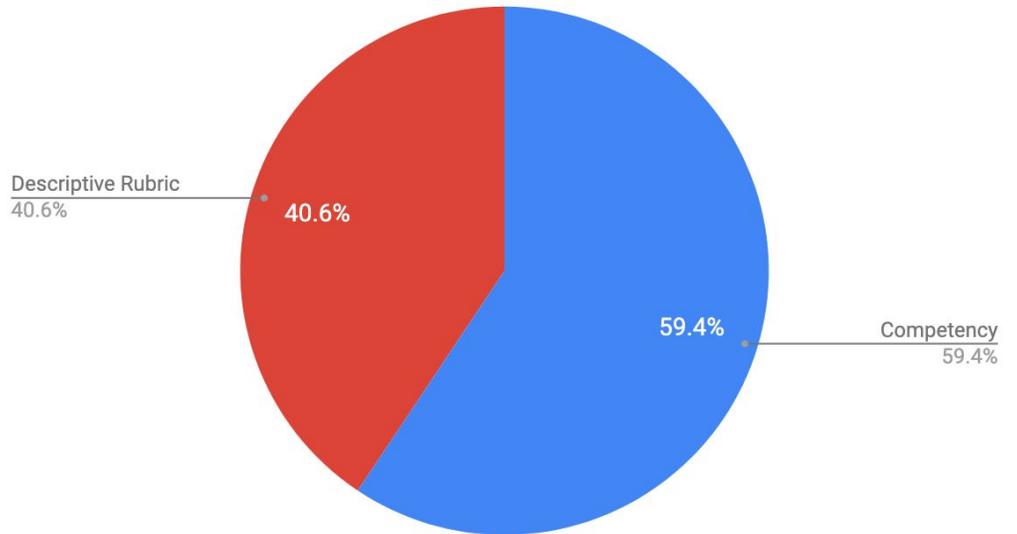


Figure 12: Assessment Frequencies

Looking at the feedback I provided to students across those assignments, I found that the types of assessment that I was focusing on in the feedback I was providing to students skewed, most directly, towards higher order assessments which focused on the conceptual elements of a given assignments (e.g. the rhetorical navigation of purpose and audience) versus lower order assessments (e.g. the accuracy of punctuation and grammatical structures). In total, I provided higher order assessment 57.9% of the time (n=208) as compared to 42.1% of the

time (n=151) for lower order assessment with many instances of provided feedback including both higher and lower-order assessment. It is important to note that in many of the smaller completion-focused assessments which included as competency-based assessment, no substantive feedback was provided.

Collaboration

Code/Definition
Collaboration (Dialogic) Instances of collaboration in which responsibilities/tasks are shared amongst group members working in tandem with one another
Collaboration (Hierarchal) Instances of student collaboration in which responsibilities/tasks are delegated to specific agents

Throughout the course students engaged in collaborative practices, both prompted by the specifics of the class itself through experiences like peer review and, of course, the Discovering a Discipline project in which all students elected to work in groups. Interestingly, students also engaged in collaborative practices that were unprompted, composing videos together, reviewing each other's work outside of the classroom, reading assigned readings together, among many other productive activities. Thinking about the ways in which my students collaborated revealed interesting discoveries, too, about how these students thought of the collaborative process generally.

For my own process, coding for collaboration stemmed from two main categories: dialogic and hierarchical collaboration. When analyzing student collaboration particularly in their Discovering a Discipline inquiry groups, many initially suspected hierarchal collaboration to be the most efficient way to work through their inquiry projects. In fact, on their group-submitted digital response video 3 in which they were tasked with defining, “how you and your partners (if you have chosen to collaborate with others) will complete the components of this research process helping me understand your progress in order to support you in the final 6 weeks of the semester,” 83.3% of groups (n=5/6) explicitly mentioned they planned to taxonomize work across group members versus only 66.6% (n=4/6) mentioning any dialogic practices.

In this quote from a final process comment, a group of student writers researching the athletic training reflect on their collaboration:

We have split up our work and have all collaborated nicely together to create good points and great research. We have given ourselves personal due dates in order to keep our project on time and also so we have time to edit and make revisions.

Note their discussion of the hierarchical process they have adopted included deadlines as well as an emphasis on collaborative review of each other’s submissions. While this group found success within the hierarchical model, it

proved disastrous for one group whose poor communication led to tension amongst group members. They began to adopt a dialogic approach as the semester ended—emblematic of a larger trend as every group mentioned dialogic writing practices being taken up in either their discovering a discipline presentations or process comments.

After analyzing the collaborative practices of students across the course I suspect that hierarchical collaboration necessitates in itself a higher level of scaffolding than dialogic collaboration making it more difficult to take up effectively. Dialogic collaboration while perceived as less expedient for students in this context, proved to be necessary for many groups who were unable to effectively delegate amongst the group.

Knowledge Domains

Code/Definition
Knowledge Domain (Writing Process) The exhibition of writing process knowledge by students
Knowledge Domain (Genre) The exhibition of genre awareness/application by students
Knowledge Domain (Subject Matter) The exhibition of subject matter knowledge by students
Knowledge Domain (Discourse Community) Students’ specified Awareness of discourse community
Knowledge Domain (Rhetorical) The exhibition of rhetorical awareness/application by students

First introduced to students in late September to explain a section of course text, knowledge domains outline the interwoven knowledges a writer must draw upon to find success in a given rhetorical situation (Beaufort, 2007):

- Discourse Community knowledge-how a writer recognizes and interacts with a group who share questions, goals, and communicative patterns.
- Rhetorical knowledge-one's ability to read specific situations in terms of how to best communicate based on the exigence/opportunity for writing, purpose, audience, genre, medium, and other aspects of context, which is typically connected to a specific discourse community.
- Genre knowledge-One's familiarity with purpose of, situations for, conventions of a particular genre. For our purposes, a genre is a type of classification for written/multimodal discourse that helps us understand not only the form of the discourse but also how the discourse works.
- Subject Matter knowledge-one's ability to effectively and accurately represent information in a given writing situation.
- Writing Process knowledge-one's ability to recognize the functional processes and labor that is connected to general success within a given situation

Knowledge Domains

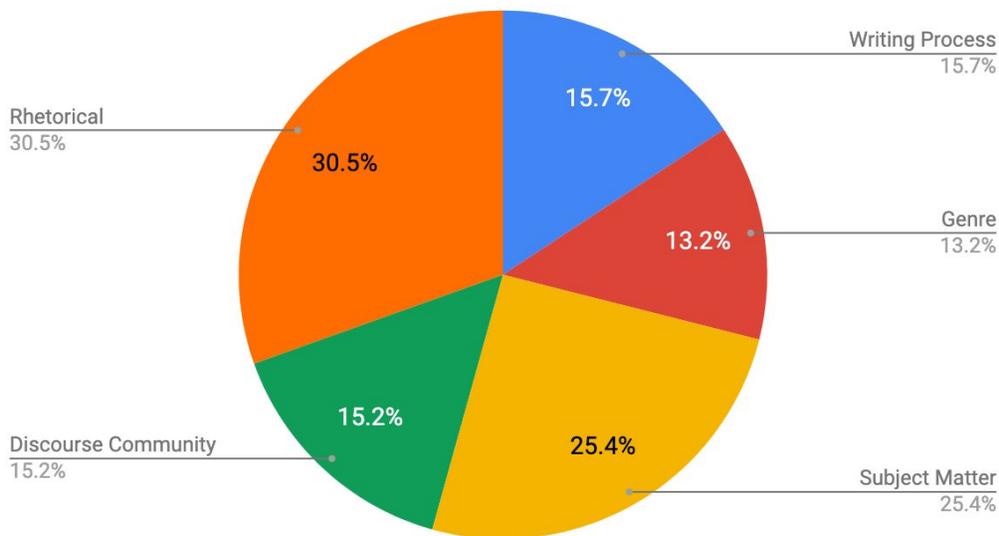


Figure 13: Student use of Knowledge Domains

Looking at students explicit recognitions of the knowledge domains in their own work (most notably their reflective writing) a favoring of rhetorical knowledge and subject matter knowledge comes to the fore. I believe this stems, first, from my own practice and an overt emphasis on rhetoric throughout the course.

Because I so frequently included elements of the rhetorical situation in my own classroom practices, included nods to audience on every major assignment sheet, and talked with students about many concepts that are components of rhetorical knowledge, I believe that I skewed student focus to this particular domain. In my

in-process coding I have noticed one emerging additional theme: students most directly recognize the significance of the Writing Process when they are asked to write reflectively (these were the primary sources of all coding of writing process knowledge in the dataset). This metacognitive writing invites students to both recognize points of success and failure, many of which tied to the writing process itself, more actively than in other contexts.

Course Content & Teaching Foci

Code/Definition
Genre Class materials, assignments, and student-produced work focused on the concept of genre
Reflection Class materials, assignments, and student-produced work focused on the concept of reflection
Research Methodology Class materials, assignments, and student-produced work focused on the concept of research methodology
Rhetorical Appeals Class materials, assignments, and student-produced work focused on the concept of rhetorical appeals
Rhetorical Situation Class materials, assignments, and student-produced work focused on the concept of rhetorical situation
Writing Process Class materials, assignments, and student-produced work focused on the concept of writing process

The codes grouped within this larger bin represent the course concepts that I repeatedly emphasized throughout the course through various assignments and classroom practices as part of the TFT curriculum I adopted. As Robertson, Taczak, and Yancey's Teaching for Transfer model suggests, these concepts were introduced and returned to throughout the course in the hopes that students would not only internalize them throughout the semester but develop their own functional understandings of them so that they could be employed in future contexts by the students. In my own course design I worked towards evenly

representing the concepts through assignments throughout the semester.

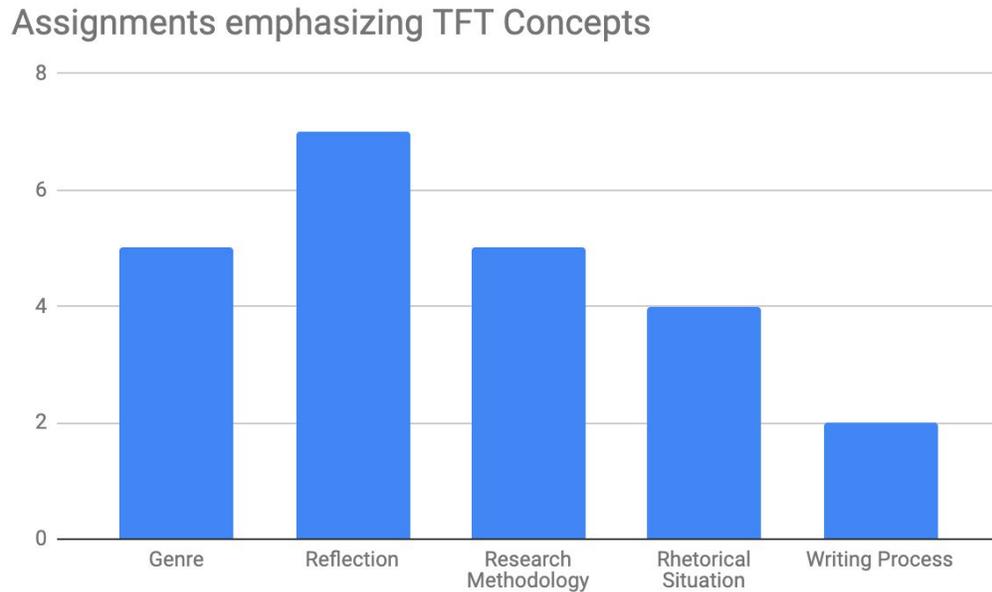


Figure 14: Assignments emphasizing TFT Concepts

Looking at the frequency of each TFT concept in assignments provides some insights into the students use mention of the knowledge domains. In both instances writing process was marginally represented. This correlation does not extend to genre however, nor does it extend rhetorical situation (a component of rhetorical knowledge). In the future, more direct coding of classroom practices in tandem with assignments may provide a more accurate picture of the TFT concepts manifesting within students' conceptions of writing.

Agency

Code/Definition
Student Agency Opportunities for authentic and meaningful student choice
Student Assessment/Appraisal Opportunities for students to provide genuine feedback regarding elements of their experience as learners
Student Curation Examples of student(s) actively selecting experience for the classroom community via explanation, contribution, and/or reflection
Instructor Curation Examples of the instructor actively selecting experience for the classroom community via explanation, contribution, and/or reflection

Coding for instances of agency and choice was/is a difficult endeavour mainly because it is so subjective—who am I to say that the choices that I was providing students were meaningful/reasonable? Instead of relying on assumption throughout the coding process for student agency (in the future I hope to gather data about student choice through surveys and supplemental interviews) I included here only opportunities for student choice and curation throughout the syllabus that I implemented into the curriculum or made note of in the classroom. Across the 13 students who agreed to participate in the study, all exhibited instances of curation: either in their completion of assignments (i.e. their selecting of a discipline for the Discovering a Discipline project or their sharing of literacy narratives in Digital Response Video 1), or more actively in classroom practices

(i.e. conducting generic criticisms of self-gathered rubrics from their other courses).

Moving to more productive and applicable metrics like the sharing of agency and curation within the course, I see that there is still a lot of room for improvement.

Curation

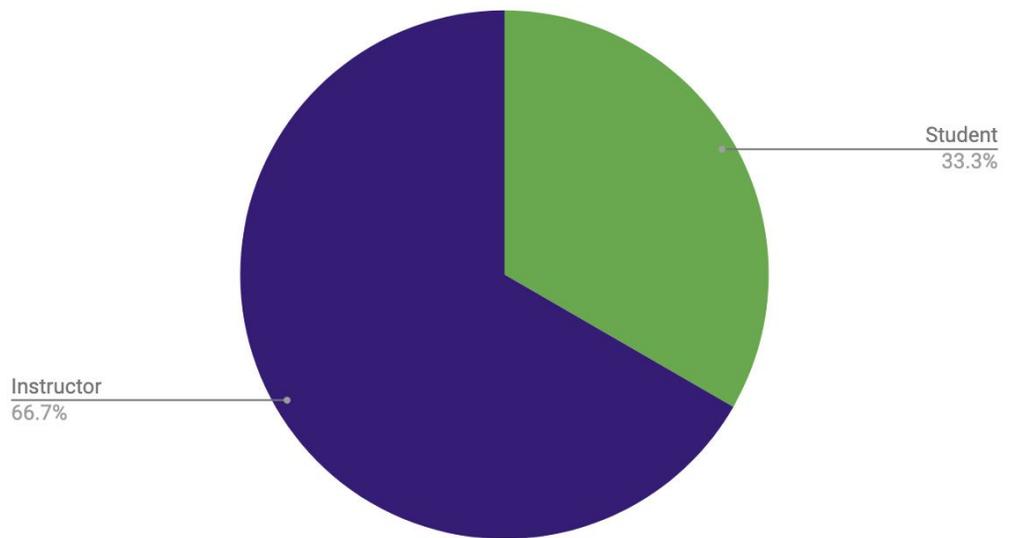


Figure 15: Classroom Curation

Clearly I curated most of the experiences of the course. Whether through class readings, assignment prompts, listed/expected practices, etc. as the instructor

I led more often than not. While I don't think it is reasonable for a class primarily curated by students (nor do I think that should be a model for which I strive as an educator), I do believe that I can continue to offer meaningful choices to my students. For instance, all of my discussion boards featured questions that I had curated from assigned readings and classroom practices. A productive route forward would be to also offer opportunities for my students to share their own insights from the readings more directly, and to also encourage them to pose questions to the classroom community through our LMS' discussion board and message board features.

Ultimately, Collaborative Curation by both instructor and students pays dividends to the larger classroom community. This semester the bulk of curation stemmed from me (the instructor) with some very notable moments of curation happening from students. What has led to the most productive/transformational moments of transfer has been however moments of mutual transfer. As was most evident in Padlet Activity 3, my students responded very positively to situations where a question was posed and both instructor and student brought curated responses to the fore. That said, agency-based pedagogies still require extensive scaffolding. In my efforts to provide authentic choice I noticed student concerns and confusion due to the lack of consistent support (notably on the disciplinary writing analysis as noted earlier). In my context students often lacked genre,

subject matter, and discourse community knowledge needed to make informed and effective choices about how to accomplish specific assignments where they were encountering genres for the first time as was the case with the Disciplinary Writing Analysis—without scaffolding for these knowledge inequities, many students were actually inhibited by their freedom to make choices.

FINDINGS

Transfer as the Fulcrum of my Study

My assessment of the successes of this course, again, fell within my larger goals for Choose Your Own Adventure itself. Goals seated both at the programmatic level—the ways in which my students developed as writers, thinkers, and communicators—and at a pedagogical level—providing students agency to bring their own choices and experiences to bear in the classroom; a curatorial model. Looking at my first research question,⁵ the adoption of the TFT curriculum and modifying it to feature opportunities for students choice and direction (components of curatorial teaching), this early synthesis of the potential of transfer rests within student success on the assignments across the semester.

Throughout the study I made sure to gather qualitative data from students across the course to attempt to both chart my success at being curatorial and also to see if these practices served students well in the FYW context. As I had mentioned earlier, FYW courses are particularly challenging because they bring students with diverse academic interests and preparedness into singular classroom spaces, creating an amalgam that must be navigated first by the instructor as they design their curriculum but more extensively by students as they move beyond

⁵ Research Question 1) How will agency based pedagogies galvanize transfer-centric learning in a First-Year Composition course?

this initial college-writing experience into their programs of study. These issues still in mind, I returned first to the outcomes of the course (listed below) which are shared across every FYWS section at Moravian and positioned to work against this amalgam productively by focusing on transfer:

1. Develop a clear and cohesive argument with persuasive appeals using evidence from critical reading and research.
2. Implement, and subsequently reflect upon, writing strategies and conventions suited to a variety of purposes, audiences, and context-appropriate genres and media.
3. Demonstrate ability to generate and pursue lines of inquiry; search, collect, and select sources appropriate to writing project(s); and document according to context-appropriate standards.
4. Provide substantial and useful revision suggestions to other writers, and revise writing using responses from others writers, including classmates, Writing Fellows, Writing Center tutors, and instructor.
5. Collaborate with faculty and Writing Fellows, and engage with the College community—students, faculty, and staff—to promote personal success at Moravian College.
6. Reflect on learning to make interdisciplinary connections among course topic, education in the liberal arts, and both individual and community identity

Figure 16: FYWS Outcomes (Fodrey, 2017)

Because Choose Your Own Adventure ran in the Fall of 2018 and I write this data analysis section in the Spring of 2019, just one semester later, it is

difficult and unwise of me to make claims about my students' abilities to transfer their knowledge into future academic and non-academic contexts because they haven't been in many contexts since then. Further still, it is somewhat difficult and unfounded to mark their transfer of knowledge into the subsequent semester as the proximity of the experiences of Choose Your Own Adventure to these new courses would make for a somewhat skewed picture representation of what would otherwise be a very interesting analysis. I have plans for embedding a longitudinal study within the course (and with that cohort of students) which I will speak to in greater detail in the "What's Next" section that follows but for now I want to focus mainly on how my students worked towards the first four outcomes of the FYWS program—considering that these outcomes are positioned most directly to foster transfer. Because these outcomes are poised for transfer, looking at student success within them in my course at least provides an initial framework for those students' abilities to transfer their knowledge moving forward. Simply put, if they don't match the initial markers of transfer as laid out by the course outcomes at the end of the course, then it is difficult to expect they will take them up down the road.

FYWS Outcome 1: Develop a clear and cohesive argument with persuasive appeals using evidence from critical reading and research.

This first foundational outcome positions students as producers of knowledge. Notice the emphasis on cohesive argumentation here, which suggests not only for a student-built interpretation, but an interpretation that is founded from active synthesis. This is echoed in the closing of this outcome with its connection to critical reading as well as persuasive construction of one's argument. Not only are students to be constructing their own argument, they are to be building it from the critical reading and arrangement of sources, synthesized in ways that are productive and effective for the given rhetorical situation.

In my own course, students engaged with research based argumentation most directly when they began their disciplinary writing analyses, the first major writing assignment that tasked students with composing an argument through an extensive research process (the first weeks of the course student inquiry was much more scaffolded).

In this assignment, students are asked to return to their course readings as well as conduct further research themselves at the scholarship produced in the field of rhetoric and writing studies to write a generic criticism of disciplinary writing - Disciplinary Writing Analysis assignment sheet

The first lines of my assignment sheet work directly towards outcome 1 here as students both rely on previous reading as well as their own inquiry to compose an argument. Looking to my narrative based rubric, one can see this emphasis carried into my grading criteria with concerns for both research and synthesis:

- employs a logically beneficial arrangement of ideas within paragraphs with appropriate section headings
- employs research question/thesis statement that effectively organizes and focuses the entirety of the paper
- effectively intertwines evidence from all research sources in ways that enhance argument and provide an informative backbone to the writing
- provides a detailed and valuable description of the social context within which the selected rhetorical artifacts exist

In addition, this assignment sheet highlights the rhetorical considerations which define a successful argument as per the outcome:

- effectively addresses the listed audience, a member of the given discourse community
- readers are definitely persuaded to consider the text's analytical ideas
- the organizational logic enhances a reader's understanding of the text's ideas

Student success on this assignment works towards establishing writerly development of academic argumentation. Furthermore, by asking students to focus primarily on academic discourse for their generic criticisms, students engaged with the kinds of genres they were likely to encounter as they advanced at Moravian. In sum, success on this assignment brought with it understandings of academic research, critical reading, synthesis, arrangement of an academic genre, and ultimately rhetorically-minded argumentation.

This assignment also was poised to allow students to curate the scholarly artifacts they utilized. Students were encouraged to immerse themselves in a series of open access resources, totalling over 40 journals, books, and websites with content to choose from. While I found this assignment unsuccessful in its scaffolding (as mentioned in earlier narrative) students still exhibited many successes with an average grade for the assignment at 85.72%. One student from my study had a particularly strong generic criticism of articles from the journal *Rhetoric Review* (which I also mentioned earlier in my narrative). To compose her criticism she focused extensively on defining the discourse community/readership of the journal. She writes:

*I have used Sonja Foss's text, *Generic Criticism*, to guide my generic participation (Foss, 2018, pp. 179-191). All of the journal articles I have chosen to analyze for this generic participation focus on the topic of*

feminist rhetoric, but each has its own audience, purpose, and use, all while strictly following the Rhetoric Review's conventions of formatting.

Her introduction, and this sentence in particular, highlights some important choices she made like the methodology she has elected to use (Sonja Foss) as well as information about the origins of her artifacts. As a microcosmic example, two sentences, we already see Jade demonstrating components of the TFT curriculum as she navigates rhetorical considerations (audience, purpose), research methodology and understandings of genre—3 of my teaching foci). On her subsequent reflection for the assignment she writes of her process:

Once I began I gather a plethora of articles, which did not match whatsoever and contained various different topics, so then I started over. I then gathered three artifacts, making sure that they were all a part of the Rhetoric Review journal article genre, which was helpful especially since I chose to do generic participation.

Here she engages in critical reflective practice critiquing her own writing process noting specifically that her process at one point necessitated a complete restart. This kind of metacognitive awareness and understanding first indicates a nuanced and reflective research process, but also alludes to her conceptions of academic discourse. For this student, these pieces of academic discourse can be seen as unique but contributing to larger wholes known as discourse communities

(Beaufort's Knowledge Domains) which she was able to assess, ultimately selecting artifacts from a singular journal to write a successful generic criticism.

FYWS Outcome 2: Implement, and subsequently reflect upon, writing strategies and conventions suited to a variety of purposes, audiences, and context-appropriate genres and media.

This singular example of reflective practice by the previous student carries forward into the second FYWS outcome by highlighting one of the habitualized practices of the TFT curriculum that I took up in my course, critical reflection of every major writing assignment. Not only did this pay dividends in developing students abilities to speak about their own writing objectively, noting the moves they were making in an assignment, but also it allowed students to more actively plan to respond to struggles they had in previous instances of writing. Looking at the Discovering a Discipline research project—in which students were able to self-select disciplines to research—and returning to the aforementioned Athletic Training Group, we can see this kind of active reflection. On their first process comment they write:

First we have created profiles on each of our interviewees and have wrote down questions that we want to ask each one specifically. Then, we created our survey, and with revisions we think it will be a success.

A few weeks later they composed their second process comment:

We completed the interviews and coded them. We sent our survey out and we only received 3 responses. We thought our interviews would be strong and they were. We also thought our survey would play a significant role, but we did not receive as many responses as we had planned. We have since then, finished our interviews and created findings amongst them. We coded our transcribed interviews and found new findings amongst them.

Across these two reflections the group is both actively planning their process, but also noting points of success and failure within it (building writing process knowledge throughout). Not only was this group actively designing and responding to their own methodology, but they also directed communication between instructor and research team through reflections like these.

This implementation and reflection on writing (survey creation, profile writing, interviewing, etc.) as mentioned previously is part of a larger trend in the course. During the semester students produced the following: emails, videos, discussion board posts, generic criticisms, memos, research reports, and keynote presentations often reflecting on their processes and submitting those in tandem with the assignment itself. Ideally, this practice of analyzing one's own writing across a multitude of genres will continue even after these types of reflections are no longer assigned.

FYWS Outcome 3: Demonstrate ability to generate and pursue lines of inquiry; search, collect, and select sources appropriate to writing project(s); and document according to context-appropriate standards.

While the Disciplinary Writing Analysis also prominently featured the collection of sources the Discovering a Discipline project was by far the largest sustained inquiry process in the course. Discovering a Discipline stemmed first as a response to knowledge inequity in first-generation college students, ultimately culminating in a student-directed inquiry project utilizing the research practices established earlier in the course as components of the TFT curriculum to write a formal report on a discipline of their choice at Moravian.

For this final submission, your research team is tasked with developing a long form 10-12 page analysis of your selected department. This means outlining Findings (3-8) of the department and academic discipline that you have studied and explaining their significance in relation to the discipline's overall identity. These findings must be supported with rationale and evidence that you have gathered from the research process conducted from weeks 9-14 of the course. Remember, this writing is informative in nature, but for you to maintain a strong ethos it is important to demonstrate your understanding of the content.

This project is meant to help students gain a better understanding of the academic options available to them at Moravian as they prepare to declare their majors in the semesters that follow while also placing them as drivers of the inquiry process throughout. Students were able to design their own data gathering measures using what we had discussed in class, then analyze the data themselves. Not only are students then developing these reports for their own understanding, but also for a non-specialist classroom audiences.

As students go through the process they become experts of a specific community on campus who they have decided to research. The group can then curate relevant components of knowledge to share from their own inquiries with the rest of the group in their report and supplementing presentation. Student-led ethnographic research projects have the potential to develop not only student capacities in writing, but in the other facets of development I have listed, making them ideal inquiry projects in a First-Year Writing context that promote both near and far transfer (Devitt, Bawarshi, & Reiff, 2003; Moore, 2017).

FYWS Outcome 4: Provide substantial and useful revision suggestions to other writers, and revise writing using responses from others writers, including classmates, Writing Fellows, Writing Center tutors, and instructor.

Students engaged in 6 peer-review experiences during the course in both one-on-one and workshop models, with the overall goal of making students

recognize peer-review as an important component of the writing process.

Unfortunately, available data from this finding is quite weak, but one positive discovery that indicated peer-review processes were being taken up by students was just how frequently they were being used when they were not mandated by me as an instructor. In short, students who engaged in workshopping outside of mandated class opportunities performed better overall. The strongest students adopted this as a component of their writing process by using services like the Writing center, meeting with me, or collaborating with peers outside the classroom.

The courses' writing fellow was exceptionally dedicated to helping students in this capacity, often holding 'office hours' to supplement my own—admittedly, these were far more popular than mine! Over the course of the semester, I met with every student at least 4 times, in addition I held over 20 meetings with students that were not mandated on the syllabus. My writing fellow met countless more times with students. In addition, many students began collaborating on assignments-most notably course readings. In our classroom community, where non-specialists were consistently reading disciplinary texts, establishing forms of “hybrid literacy” where students recognize their readings as both practically oriented and serving larger components of the course together, and made that process routine, established the kinds of mental development and

habitualized practice I hope that they can bring forward into future classes (Tinberg, 2014; Church, Ritchhart & Morrison, 2011).

Taken together, I believe students have demonstrated the beginnings of transfer through their contributions this semester. Not only have they achieved the outcomes of the course, but they have also habitualized elements of the TFT curriculum, most notably their recognition and exhibition of components of rhetorical knowledge, which makes me optimistic for future inquiries with this group.

In Closing

For my study, transfer truly serves as the definitive marker through which all other considerations have fostered and, I believe, the most important consideration of an FYWS course. Transfer in this context mediates my study in that both questions look to transfer in different ways:

- Question 1 in the ways students think actively about future contexts through their final research project which tasks them with applying current course concepts towards a desired end.
- Question 2 in the ways that students *implicitly* develop the habit of mind needed for both near and far transfer

In sum, Course design AND effective practice both must begin with transfer in mind.

Assessment

Looking next to my own assessment across the semester, and the ways that it changed as the semester progressed—that is, assignments changed, learning goals shifted, students became more adept writers in our classroom community, and my own assessment structure changed to a competency based model in the latter half of the course—there too was an interesting emphasis in *what* was being assessed within a given student submission.

Instances of both higher and lower order assessment in my study were prevalent; virtually across every major assignment of the course. Interesting, however, was how assignments themselves dictated the assessment provided to students. For instance, I provided 9 students (50%) higher order assessment on their persuasive/informative presentations while I provided lower order assessment to every student in the group. This trend is completely reversed in other assignments. For instance, the digital response video 2 has every student receiving higher-order assessment with only 10 (55%) of those same students receiving assessment on lower order concerns. To make things more complicated, every narrative rubric included elements of both higher and lower order assessment. Building on notes from a previous study, I believe this statistical parity more directly recognized the equal importance of both higher and lower order assessments generally.

After looking at the assignments themselves and where students seemed to receive feedback on their work I began to notice that my responses tended towards one focus or another implicitly based on the genre within which the student work was produced. This has led me to a new insight: the genre itself plays a role in the type of feedback most appropriate as students struggle to accumulate new genre knowledge.

Looking back to the previously offered examples: Persuasive and Informative Presentations as well as Digital Response Video 2. Both offered assessment criteria that was higher order:

- Rhetorical Negotiation of Purpose and Audience (both)
- Genre Considerations (Persuasive and Informative Presentations)
- Analysis (Digital Response Video)
- Summary (Digital Response Video)

as well as lower order:

- Engagement (Persuasive and Informative Presentations)
- Readability (Persuasive and Informative Presentations)
- Creativity (Digital Response Video)
- Writer's Ethos (Digital Response Video)

These two assignments, both built with meaningful student choice in mind, tasked students with selecting topics, organizing and delivering information. For the

video, students were to select and explain a course concept to a non-specialist audience. For the presentation, they were to select a topic and deliver a 3-5 minute keynote. In both instances, we see an emphasis on multimodal composition, synthesis, and audience consideration. Looking at students' feedback across those assignments however, we see trends between the feedback they received. This is interestingly displayed on one student's submission across both assignments in which I provided the following written rationale to support my assessment:

Digital Response Video 2:

Public speaking classes are very valuable and I have found that many students share your sentiment. **Great job synthesizing our list of qualities of effective public speaking into three larger categories. I think these are more accessible to an outside audience. Great job with your explanation here, STUDENT. To push your thinking a little bit further, where do you see recognitions of rhetorical appeals in your classmates' presentations? Or perhaps how do you recognize discourse communities when one is engaging in a presentation?**

Persuasive/Informative Presentation:

I think your introduction was somewhat nice and I think this topic works well. **I appreciate that you are connecting your work to your audience.**

That said, your community slide was somewhat delivered oddly. You did a great job of demonstrating the legacy of the college and I think your recognition of the tattoo as representative of a larger sentiment is great. **A very pathos-filled presentation.** As it stands currently none of your citations are correct and I feel as though your slides look incomplete. I think the amount of text that you use on your slides is good as launching points. I appreciate that you are **doing your best here to connect with the audience** but the level of polish does not really feel there in this context.

In this first set of feedback I provide both a positive appraisal of the student's work in synthesis and audience communication while also prompting the student to continue to think about components of the course like discourse community and rhetorical appeal. These notes are tied entirely towards the higher order assessment (bolded for emphasis) of the rubric. In the second we see much more emphasis placed on lower order assessment (underlined for emphasis) with some slight recognitions of higher order assessment throughout. Considering that this student received a B and C+ for these assignments respectively, and both were working towards similar aims pedagogically, than it is somewhat interesting that these two responses are not more alike. This also raises questions about the scaffolding of the assignments themselves—if they are two separate exigencies,

we could not expect similar assessment structures if the scaffolding to these projects was not also the same. Looking at the amount of feedback students received across the course help us better understand this difference.

After looking through my data I have noticed an additional trend which I had not initially planned to gather data on: the informal feedback I was providing students in things like conversation, email, and other seemingly innocuous venues was noted by several students (in their student-specific observation folders) to be supremely helpful. I also have suspected that many students were not engaging with my summative assessment in the same ways that they engaged with my formative assessment and in-process feedback. As such I have developed a new coding bin, feedback, to assess what types of feedback I was providing to students on their drafts which I hope to use in the future. I plan to then compare an additional two metrics to see if that feedback was utilized or not. I suspect that the informal feedback will be more regularly implemented in future writing by students.

As was discussed at length this semester, and what seems a fitting end to this finding, an ideal assessment measure for writing is not obvious. After working with both descriptive rubrics and competencies I have found that competency-based assessment is fantastic for process-based assignments but also somewhat limits the specificity of criteria one can emphasize as important to

students through the assessment itself. That said, competencies are much more flexible than descriptive rubrics and students feel more liberated to take risks when they are utilized. In closing, I find that competency-based assessment mitigates student concern but makes overall assessment less specific. Because this shift towards competency-based assessment was made en media res and unplanned in my initial research design, I do not have enough data to substantiate this suspicion, which I plan to investigate further in the next iteration of the course.

Written, Communicative, and Cognitive Development

To investigate my second research question⁶ I placed the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy against the practices and assignments embedded within the curriculum, mapping them to the taxonomy to assess for things like cognitive and communicative development, and then also placing those assignments and practices against the overlaying course outcomes to ideally align an emphasis on transfer with the development I hoped to foster in Choose Your Own Adventure.

⁶Research Question 2) How can student-led inquiry projects and a curatorial teaching model foster written, communicative, and cognitive development in first-year college students?

	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Factual Knowledge (5)					1	4
Conceptual Knowledge (9)		2	2	1	1	3
Procedural Knowledge (10)			2	1	1	6
Metacognitive Knowledge (6)				1	2	3

Figure 17: The Taxonomy Table w/ LinC 101 J assignment frequencies
(adapted from Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)

Across the semester I mapped each given assignment to the taxonomy table to notice that my students worked most directly in the development of procedural knowledge (stemming primarily from my emphasis on research methodology in the course) and conceptual knowledge (built from student's course readings).

As composition-educator Paula Mathieu (2014) notes, projects which ask students to engage in difficult, academically-backed, genres create, "...balance between reporting information and constructing their own arguments in a piece of analytic writing" (p. 117). In my own mapping I noted many instances of students first applying knowledge directly and ultimately using that to either create something new or evaluate their work. This is perhaps most evident in the genre analysis students completed both in their Disciplinary Writing Analysis and Discovering a Discipline projects. Rhetorical genre theory as is employed in these assignments serves as a tool for helping students understand the elements of not only genre conventions, but also begin recognizing larger elements of rhetorical situation. Essentially by looking at consistent genres one is also looking at similar rhetorical situations.

A qualitative study conducted by researcher Michael-John Depalma (2015) looked at writer's ability to transition written pieces into digital spaces, making note of these writers' recognition of genre convention tied to these new platforms. In sum, his research found that through a recognition of convention one could transition texts between rhetorical situations (Depalma, 2015). This work of finding new rhetorical situations then fosters both transfer-centric skills and is built upon the same practices as rhetorical genre theory. In the context of Depalma's research an emphasis on the navigation of new situations is a focus. In

an educational context with inexperienced writers however, a recognition of a consistent situation paves the way for this tasks of far transfer.

Fortunately my students were completing cognitively engaging assignments that fostered transfer; they were consistently asked to analyze, evaluate, and create, but the next question: how were students performing on these actual assignments. Averages for the three major writing assignments: Composing an Effective Email (91%), Disciplinary Writing Analysis (86%), and the written research report for the Discovering a Discipline project (89%) was certainly promising. With this information in mind, I returned to my data from two distinct but interwoven entrypoints: my own contributions as instructor as well as my students contributions to the course. I do think it important to note here, initially, that across these two sections my interpretation is prominent. My students did not help me in the analysis of data in any way, so much of what I am writing stems from my own research/instructor-centric perspective as I work to make sense of and accurately represent the important and unique voices and perspectives each of my students.

Student development did not occur only across the major assignments of the course however. As Jody Shipka notes of her own teaching, “I want students to attend to writing in relation to the other supports and semiotic systems they draw upon while making and negotiating meaning, scholarship that deals with

writing and the process of composing written texts strikes me as a necessary component of the course.- Shipka, 2014, 214). My course, too, was interested in having students engage in other forms of text creation. One such example where development was consistently high were the Digital Response Videos student produced across the semester. They were generally fantastic with a holistic average of (97%). I hoped that these videos provided opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in creative ways throughout the semester. Digital projects should present resources that students can identify as valuable not only to the assignment within which they are tasked with working through them, but also as tools that can be used in the future on other projects as well. By normalizing the practice of utilizing recording software and creating video we worked towards breaking down the novelty of the practice as a class. Instead we established video production as a viable way to transmit information, and encouraged each other to think rhetorically about the situations in which this practice is most viable in the spirit of Shipka's claim. Holistically, these videos were positioned as opportunities for my students to engage with elements of multimodality as they constructed video responses at points throughout the course. In addition to these larger inquiry projects, the use of consistent "thinking routines" as emphasized by educational researchers Ron Ritchhart, Mark Church, and Karin Morrison in their text *Making Thinking Visible* (2011) habitualized valuable learning practices

within the classroom. For example, the consistent turn to classwide discussion via our LMS which fit within the understand, apply, and analyze dimensions of the taxonomy established the patterns of critical discourse in our classroom community (Church, Ritchhart & Morrison, 2011).

WHAT'S NEXT

One of the most exciting elements of Action Research is the cyclical nature of it. The idea that studies provide both answers and more questions. That action research involves the persistent investigation of these questions as they arise as one endeavours to improve their practice. Looking now at my own study, and what I have learned from this experience, I also recognize many new questions that stem from this initial study.

First, I hope to extend this research longitudinally in a similar fashion to Liz Wardle's (2007) longitudinal study of her FYW students. This involves getting in contact with some of my students in consecutive years to both interview them and also collect some samples of their writing. With this extra data I hope that I can assess more accurately how actively students are transferring the specific knowledge from Choose Your Own Adventure into new contexts and trying to recognize points of both far transfer—transfer that asks students to utilize previously developed knowledges in contexts that are unfamiliar or distant from those in which the knowledges were first developed—and near transfer—transfer that asks students to utilize previously developed knowledges in contexts that are familiar to those within which the knowledges were first developed. I hope that it will help me recognize more accurately what elements of the course are valuable to students after our semester together ends.

Thinking too, to the design of my own study as it is conducted with students in the class, I recognize the value of surveys as another potential data source that could provide some much-needed qualitative data. While I had initially planned for surveys to be used in my study (see Appendix B) I decided to omit them as I felt they served no purpose for the students, and only served to help my process as a researcher. I aim to redesign my surveys and use them as a practice connected to a unit on survey design in future iterations of Choose Your Own Adventure which will both allow me to gather valuable data and allow my students to thoughtfully analyze survey design.

Students will be given two surveys throughout the semester, one at the midterm week and a final survey during the last week of the course. Focused on asking questions about the course's success in terms of reaching the outcomes as well as fostering important elements of writing development using elements from the NSSE to assess students' perceptions of their own ability throughout the course, they will also ask questions from the midterm and closing survey.

Finally, I found a productive line of inquiry stemming from the feedback that I was providing students, which due to the limits of the current study I was unable to analyze in any great depth. I plan to record and code all feedback in a running document for each students so that I can assess both how frequently I am

providing feedback and how it manifests (or doesn't) on subsequent student work either for the same assignment or a future assignment.

Thinking about how this will impact my pedagogy in the future, I hope to take what I have learned from both the successes of this iteration of Choose Your Own Adventure and also, and perhaps more importantly, the failures. As I prepare to teach Choose Your Own Adventure in Fall 2019 (with one of my Fall 2018 students as Writing Fellow) along with an additional course dedicated to collaborative worldbuilding titled Building Better Worlds, I hope to continue improving as an educator and learning alongside my students.

One final time, I would like to thank everyone involved in this process.

I couldn't have done it without you.

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University Press

Appendix A: Choose Your Own Adventure Syllabus

First-Year Writing Seminar: Fall 2018 Linc 101 J: Choose Your Own Adventure

Instructor: Chris Hassay
Classroom: Comenius 101
Class Time: MWF 11:45-12:55

General Information

Office: Zinzendorf 302
Office Hours: Monday: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Wednesday: 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM
Telephone: (610) 861-1300 ext. 7513
E-mail: hassayc@moravian.edu
Course Web Site: <https://canvas.moravian.edu/>

Writing Fellow: Ryan Scott
E-mail: scottr02@moravian.edu

Course Description

First-Year Writing Seminar (FYWS) introduces students to academic literacy practices central to success in any discipline at Moravian College. The course is designed to help students transition to college expectations, generate research questions, find and evaluate sources, and make informed decisions about how best to achieve their purposes in various writing situations. The subject area focus of each section of First-Year Writing Seminar varies, but all sections are similar in their approach: students develop the skills of critical reading, research, argumentation, revision, and reflection; and students work collaboratively with classmates, the instructor, and the Writing Fellow to improve writing, build community, and explore available campus resources to achieve academic and personal success during their time at Moravian.

Choose Your Own Adventure is a course designed to present, thoughtfully analyze, and create the various types of writing that will be expected of students as they move through their college careers. There are several important writing tasks that are shared among every academic discipline which are fundamentally important to a student's success. This course will look at how each discipline oftentimes defines those different types of writing in ways that are representative

of their field and help prepare students to look at different disciplines, identify the characteristics of writing within that discipline, and understand why those characteristics are significant. Furthermore, this course will also serve as an open forum for students to begin learning and utilizing some fundamental skills of Rhetoric and Writing Studies which will holistically serve them as writers.

My Action Research

As an MAT Fellow within the Moravian College Education Department, I am conducting a research study that assesses the effectiveness of classroom practices utilized in our course. As part of this research, student writing and observational data will be used to assess the validity of the course design. Your participation in this study does not require any additional work beyond the purview of the class itself. Not participating in this research will not negatively impact your grade in any way.

Writing Fellow: Ryan Scott

Ryan is a great resource to help guide you through this transition to college life as well as help you with your writing during the semester. She will engage in classroom discussions, help you with your assignments, assist you in finding extracurricular events on campus, and generally be awesome! Ryan currently works at the Hub Desk on campus and as a member of the Greyhound calling team. In addition, she serves as a writer for the college newspaper. Feel free to talk to her about these positions or other opportunities on campus that you are interested in—she is extremely knowledgeable!

Ryan will also act as your liaison for the Action-Research Study that will be conducted in the course throughout the semester. **If you have any concerns with the research or wish to discuss your participation in the research at any time, you can talk with Ryan.**

Course Outcomes

In First-Year Writing Seminar, students will cultivate and apply critical thinking about the course topic in order to:

1. Develop a clear and cohesive argument with persuasive appeals using evidence from critical reading and research.
2. Implement, and subsequently reflect upon, writing strategies and conventions suited to a variety of purposes, audiences, and context-appropriate genres and media.

3. Demonstrate an ability to generate and pursue a line of inquiry; search, collect, select, and evaluate sources appropriate to writing project(s); and document according to context-appropriate standards.
4. Provide substantial and useful revision suggestions to other writers, and revise writing using responses from others, including classmates, Writing Fellows, Writing Center tutors, and instructor.
5. Collaborate with faculty and Writing Fellows, and engage with the College community—students, faculty, and staff—to promote personal success at Moravian College.
6. Reflect on learning to make interdisciplinary connections among course topic, education in the liberal arts, and both individual and community identity.

Required Texts & Supplies

Texts:

1. Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies: Classroom Edition

- a. Adler-Kassner, Linda, and Elizabeth A. Wardle. *Naming what we know: threshold concepts of writing studies Classroom Edition*. Logan: Utah State U Press, 2016. Print.

2. Reading Rhetorically

- a. Bean, John C., Virginia A. Chappell, and Alice M. Gillam. *Reading rhetorically*. Boston: Pearson, 2014. Print.

Required Coursework and Grades

It is within the instructor’s purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for any assignment and for the final course grade. Grades will consider the following aspects of writing, in the context of a particular assignment: purpose and audience negotiation, organization, writing development, the writer’s ethos, and readability.

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage
Composing an Effective Email	Week 3	10%
Disciplinary Writing Analysis	Week 8	15%

Discovering a Discipline Project	Week 16	20%
Research Portfolio	Week 12,14	5%
Discovering a Discipline Presentation	Week 15	5%
Digital Response Videos	Weeks 2,5,10,14	20%
Reading Responses & Short Assignments	Ongoing	20%
Academic Extracurricular Events (3)	Ongoing	5%
Total		100%

Letter Grades

A 93-100	A- 90-92	B+ 87-89	B 83-86	B- 80-82	C+
77-79					
C 73-76	C- 70-72	D+ 67-69	D 63-66	D- 60-62	NC*
0-59					

A letter grade is assigned if the course is passed. A grade of NC (No Credit) is assigned if the course is failed. NC is not computed in the term or cumulative GPA. Students who earn NC must retake an F1 course the following semester.

Explanation of Assignments

Composing an Effective Email: You will be expected to write a series of formal emails that respond to specific rhetorical situations out of a list of potential options (you will choose). In addition, you will write a reflective statement accompanying your emails that explains to me how you are effectively utilizing rhetorical strategies in order to communicate via this digital medium.

Disciplinary Writing Analysis: Students will undergo a mixed methods research process—facilitated within the classroom and through class readings—that will culminate in an analysis of writing artifacts from distinct academic disciplines. Students are expected to identify the features of each discipline’s discourse, think critically about why those differences exist, and explain how they contribute to one’s understanding of a discourse community. Throughout this process students

will develop annotated bibliographies to chronicle their progress as well as practice some of the strategies used in the Discovering a Discipline Project.

Discovering a Discipline: In this mini-research study, students in groups of up to 3 will be expected to utilize the skillsets and processes developed in the **Disciplinary Writing Analysis assignment** to investigate a department of their choice on campus. Groups will follow a methodology featuring analysis of disciplinary scholarship fostered through library visits and the study of programmatic artifacts including but not limited to course offerings, syllabi, and assignment sheets. Teams will also be tasked with interviewing at least one member of the department or discipline within which they are focusing. The process will culminate in a long form (10-15) page analysis of a specific academic discipline. Components of the Discovering a Discipline Assignment Include:

Stakeholder Interview: This interview must be at least 20 minutes long, must be transcribed and coded, and can be used as an important primary source when composing the analysis.

Research Portfolio: This portfolio will be assessed first in Week 11 and later in Week 14 to monitor the research progress of each Discovering a Discipline group's research progress. Research portfolios include but are not limited to: 1) an annotated bibliography; 2) a coded interview transcription; and 3) collected artifacts from the chosen discipline.

Discovering a Discipline Presentation: In addition to the deliverables of the Discovering a Discipline assignment, students will be required to create and deliver a presentation explaining the discipline they have selected to their fellow classmates so as to highlight the various options available on Moravian's campus. This presentation will be assessed based on not only the quality of the content, but also on student's use of the various techniques of public speaking presented in class.

Digital Response Videos: Students will be tasked with composing short videos throughout the course responding to prompts and questions that guide our work. In addition students will be invited to make suggestions for the course in order to ensure that classroom practices best suit their needs as learners. Students are expected to engage with the content and the framework as they see fit, utilizing

their technology (MacBooks and iPads). The ways in which students utilize the video medium is their choice as well as the topics they choose to cover when responding to the prompts.

Reading Responses & Short Assignments: Students will be expected to contribute to an online discussion board in response to the readings for the course. These short responses will ask questions about course content and encourage students to engage with one another in academic discussion.

Academic Extracurricular Events: Part of the FYWS program's focus is to introduce students to college-level writing, but also encourage them to become active members of our Moravian community. As such, all students are expected to attend at least three Academic Extracurricular events and write brief reflections on their experiences detailing the event and their takeaways from it. Students are encouraged to advocate for their selected events BEFORE completing submitting their reflections.

First-Year Writing Seminar Policies and Resources for Students

Academic Code of Conduct

All work that you submit or present as part of course assignments or requirements must be your original work unless otherwise expressly permitted by the instructor. This includes any work presented, be it in written, oral, or digital form or in any other technical or artistic medium. When you use the specific thoughts, ideas, writings, or expressions of another person, you must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source. Direct quotes from any source (including online sources) must be placed in quotation marks (or otherwise marked appropriately) and accompanied by proper citation, following the preferred bibliographic conventions of your department or instructor. In this class you will be using APA and MLA citation depending on the disciplinary choices you make. Student ignorance of bibliographic convention and citation procedures is not a valid excuse for having committed plagiarism. **To reiterate: When you use the specific thoughts, ideas, writing, or expressions of another person, you must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source, regardless of the genre or medium in which you are working.**

You can familiarize yourself with all aspects of Moravian College's Academic Code of Conduct here:

<http://www.moravian.edu/static/studentLife/handbook/academic/academic2.html>

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. First-Year Writing Seminar is a course that includes engaged discussion, in-class writing, peer group work, and conferences. Therefore, students should not be late and should not miss class. Any in-class work missed as a result of tardiness or unexcused absence cannot be made up. Students enrolled in this course cannot miss more than a week of classes—three class meetings—without penalty. For each class meeting missed thereafter, your final course grade will be reduced by 1 percentage point.

All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion. A dean's note or other official Moravian College document justifies absences for Moravian functions but must be presented to your instructor before the scheduled event. Doctor's appointments, job interviews, and other important appointments **do not count as excused absences**. If you have a legitimate conflict or an extreme emergency, discuss the situation with your instructor.

Student Affairs Sessions

Your engagement and work for both the classroom component and the Student Affairs component of FYWS are essential to your successful completion of FYWS. In order to earn credit for FYWS, you need to show sufficient engagement both in participation and in regarding the Student Affairs sessions, assignments, and activities. That means you have to be present at every Student Affairs Friday session. Attendance will be taken via card swipe each week before you enter Prosser Auditorium.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted without penalty unless students make arrangements for an extension before the due date. Major assignments that are turned in late will incur a 5% penalty per 24-hour period.

Conferences

First-Year Writing Seminar instructors may cancel a class session to host individual or small group conferences. Students should come to conferences

prepared to discuss their work. If your class has been cancelled to hold student-teacher conferences and you miss your assigned conference time, it may be counted as an absence by your instructor.

Peer Review

We improve as writers by responding to input from readers. To that end your essay drafts will go through extensive peer review. You are expected to take the input from your classmates seriously and respond to their feedback when you revise. You are likewise expected to take your job as a reviewer seriously. Critique others' work as you wish to be critiqued. Treat each other with respect, and give helpful constructive criticism. Each of us has areas to improve in our writing.

Class Conduct

Students in this class are encouraged to speak up and participate during class meetings. Because the class represents a diversity of individual beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences, every member of this class must show respect for every other member of this class. Additionally, all Moravian College students are responsible for upholding the Community Standards, which can be read online in the Student Handbook:

<http://www.moravian.edu/static/studentLife/handbook/standards/standards.html>

Title IX

Moravian College faculty are committed to providing a learning environment free from gender discrimination and sexual violence. Should a student disclose a concern of this nature, the faculty member is obligated to inform the Title IX Coordinator, who will assist the student in determining resources for support and resolution. Fully confidential reporting options include the [Counseling Center](#), [Health Center](#), and [Religious Life](#) (chaplain). Survivors are encouraged to seek immediate assistance by contacting the [Advocates](#) at (484) 764-9242. For more information, please visit www.moravian.edu/titleix.

Office Hours

I encourage all students to utilize me as a resource. As such, you are all welcome and invited to attend my office hours where I can assist you with issues pertaining to our class and any other topics you would like to discuss. Furthermore, students will be required to visit me for one on one meetings before submitting some major projects. **If these sessions are missed you will be**

required to see me during my office hours or your work will not be accepted.

Reeves Library

All FYWS students are required to conduct and document their research. In addition to the physical resources available—books, magazines, journals, newspapers, and digital resources—Reeves Library has the invaluable resource of reference librarians. Our librarians are always interested in helping you with any questions you may have on research and resources. All sections of FYWS attend a special library session to learn more about how to navigate the library's many resources.

Writing Support and Academic Support

The Writing Center is a resource for Moravian students. At the Writing Center, a trained peer tutor will work individually with you on your writing, at any point in the process from brainstorming to editing. All FYWS students visit the Writing Center at some point during the semester to learn more about this resource and/or to attend tutoring sessions. The Writing Center is located on the second floor of Zinzendorf Hall, a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, visit <https://moravian.mywconline.com/>.

If you need other academic support, such as assistance with time management, learning strategies, or a tutor for a content area other than writing, please contact the Student Success Program Coordinator at 610-625-7625.

Accessibility and Disability Support

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact the Academic and Accessibility Support Center, located in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling 610-861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic and Accessibility Support Center. Moravian encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact the event sponsor at least one week prior to the event.

Counseling

Counselors at the Counseling Center help students deal with the stresses of college life. They are a great resource for all students. You can give them a call at 610-861-1510 or stop by at 1301 Main Street.

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Course Schedule

Week One	August 27	August 29	August 31
For Class:	N/A	- Bring two Questions about the Syllabus to Class - Read "Fireflies" by Yōko Ōta	- Student Affairs Friday Session: <i>Student Involvement</i> (Prosser Auditorium)
Week Two	September 3	September 5	September 7
For Class:	- <i>Naming What We Know:</i> Preface & Introduction - Video Response 1: Good Writing, Learning Styles, & Class Expectations	- Composing an Effective Email: First Drafts (2) Due	- Student Affairs Friday Session: <i>Career & Civic Engagement</i> (Prosser Auditorium)
Week Three	September 10	September 12	September 14
For Class:	- <i>Naming What We Know:</i> Naming What we Know & Metaconcept: Writing is an Activity and A Subject of Study	- Composing an Effective Email: Final Draft Due	- Student Affairs Friday Session: <i>Academic Support</i> (Prosser Auditorium)
Week Four	September 17	September 19	September 21

For Class:	- <i>Naming What We Know</i> : Concept 1 - InFocus Event Reflections	- <i>Reading Rhetorically</i> : Chapter 1 - Speech Topics Due	Speech Outlines Due
Week Five	September 24	September 26	September 28
For Class:	- <i>Reading Rhetorically</i> : Chapter 2 - "Anyone for Tennis?" by Anne Freadman - Speech Delivery Day 1	HERITAGE DAY!	- Speech Delivery Day 2 - <i>Naming What We Know</i> : Concept 2 - Video Response 2 : Synthesizing Course Readings
Week Six	October 1	October 3	October 5
For Class:	- "The Concept of Discourse Community" by John Swales - <i>Writing about Writing</i> Discourse Community Analysis	- Bring in Assignment Sheet from Another Course - "Genre Analysis" by Rachel Lewis	- <i>Reading Rhetorically</i> : Chapter 3
Week Seven	October 8	October 10	October 12
For Class:	- Library Visit 1: Class held in Reeves Library - <i>Reading Rhetorically</i> : Chapter 4	- <i>Naming What We Know</i> : Concept 3	- Disciplinary Writing Analysis Rough Draft Due
Week Eight	October 15	October 17	October 19
For Class:	FALL BREAK	- Individual Meetings with Instructor	- Disciplinary Writing Analysis Final Draft Due
Week Nine	October 22	October 24	October 26

For Class:	- <i>Reading Rhetorically</i> : Chapter 5 - Disciplinary Writing Analysis Written Reflection	- Develop Preliminary List of Potential Departments to Research	- <i>Naming What We Know</i> : Concept 4
Week Ten	October 29	October 31	November 2
For Class:	- Video Response 3 : Research Plan (one video per group)	- "Why Interview" by Irving Seidman - Identify 5 Potential Interviewees & Draft a First-Contact Email	- Interview Questions Rough Draft Due
Week Eleven	November 5	November 7	November 9
For Class:	- Interview Questions Due	- <i>Reading Rhetorically</i> : Chapter 6 - Library Visit 2: Collecting Disciplinary Writing -Schedule and Conduct Interviews	-Schedule and Conduct Interviews - <i>Naming What We Know</i> : <i>Concept 5</i>
Week Twelve	November 12	November 14	November 16
For Class:	-Schedule and Conduct Interviews - Survey Design Template Due	-Schedule and Conduct Interviews20	-Schedule and Conduct Interviews - Research Portfolio Draft 1 Due
Week Thirteen	November 19	November 21	November 23

For Class:	-Deadline: Interviews Completed	Happy Thanksgiving	Happy Thanksgiving
Week Fourteen	November 26	November 28	November 30
For Class:	-Coded Transcripts Due	-Video Response 4: Our Readings and Your Research Progress -Discovering a Discipline Rough Draft Due	- Research Portfolio Draft 2 Due
Week Fifteen	December 3	December 5	December 7
For Class:	- Discovering a Discipline Rough Draft 2 Due	-Discovering a Discipline Presentation Due	
Week Sixteen	December 10	December 12	December 14
For Class:	Final Exams!	Final Exams! - Discovering a Discipline Project Final Draft Due	Final Exams!

Appendix B: HSIRB Documentation
2017-2018 HUMAN SUBJECTS INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD (HSIRB)
PROPOSAL FORM

This form must be completed for any research activity involving human participants. All researchers should review the Moravian College Human Subjects Research Policy found at **p:\hsirb\MoravianCollegeHSIRBPolicy.doc** before designing and submitting their proposals.

When you have provided all of the information required in the proposal form below, please follow the submission instructions below. ***Please be aware that incomplete proposals will be returned to the proposer until they are complete.*** Failure to submit all documentation will delay the Human Subjects Internal Review Board (HSIRB) review of your research proposal.

Proposal Review Timetable: Please note that during the standard academic year when the committee meets regularly, it typically takes a minimum of two weeks (14 days) for the committee to review and respond to completed proposals. Most proposals require some modifications before we grant full approval and the revision process typically adds an additional week to the review process.

Submit all of the following:

1. This completed Human Subjects Internal Review Board (HSIRB) Proposal Form. Please make sure all required information is complete. We encourage completion of this proposal form as a Word document.
2. A copy of your Informed Consent form and/or other evidence of Informed Consent to voluntary participation [See HSIRB proposed Policy #MC.116 & MC.117. The policy statement can be viewed at Public/hsirb/.] You can also find helpful informed consent guidelines at public/hsirb.
3. A copy of all of your instruments (surveys, tests, etc.). If you are showing pictures or videos, a copy of these need to be submitted as well. You may provide links if the material will be accessible online.

Submit ***electronic copies*** of complete proposals to:

hsirb@moravian.edu

You have the option of either combining the various documents in one file or submitting separate files as email attachments, but **please make sure that the file name clearly indicates the section of the overall proposal package and the author**. So, for example, please call your document something along the lines of “johnson.proposal.docx” and “johnson.informedconsent.docx.” The preferred format for all materials is Word (doc/docx) or PDF. We understand that some materials may only be available in other formats, but please make every effort to send files in one of those two formats. At the end of the approval process, we will collect **electronic signatures** from proposers and their faculty sponsors (if applicable).

Questions: contact

Dr. Jean L. DesJardin, Chair HSIRB
 Education Department
desjardinj@moravian.edu
 (610) 861-1317

Part I: RESEARCHER

1. Proposer: Christopher Hassay	2. Department: Education
3. Mailing address: 1200 Main Street (Box 563)	4. Phone: 484-226-6368
5. E-mail address: hassayc@moravian.edu	
6. This is a (please check): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission of a rejected Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Request for modification	7. Research Start/End Dates: Make sure you clearly define the start and end dates. Format as month, day, year. Start: August 24, 2018 End: December 17, 2019
7. Title of Proposal: Curatorial Teaching: Student-Directed Inquiry in a First Year Writing Classroom	
8. Faculty Advisor: Dr. Tristan Gleason	

Part II: PROPOSAL TYPE

1. This research involves **ONLY** the use of **educational tests** (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude or achievement).

Yes
 No

2. This research collects interviews or surveys **ONLY** of **elected or appointed public officials** or candidates for such.

Yes
 No

3. This research involves **ONLY** observations of **public behavior**.

Yes
 No

4. This research involves **ONLY** **existing data, documents, records or specimens**.

Yes
 No

5. List the **research funding sources**, if any.

Moravian College Education

6. The results of this research will be published.

Yes
 No
 Uncertain

If you marked “yes” or “uncertain”, please provide a brief description of the possible forum of publication (for example, peer-reviewed journal, conference presentation, etc.)

Description of publication forum:

Moravian Thesis Archives and appropriate Education and Rhetoric/Composition journals if appropriate.

In this next section, you will provide extensive details about the research project. Please make sure that your explanations/descriptions are clearly written and grammatically correct so that the committee can accurately follow and assess your proposal.

Part III. DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

1. In this section, you have the option of either addressing each of the following subheadings individually or together (since there may be some overlap) in your proposal narrative. If providing a narrative, please make sure that each of the following topics is clearly identified in the narrative.

- a. **Objectives: (purpose?)**

The purpose of my study is to assess the validity of a teaching model built upon student choice and inquiry within a first-year Writing About Writing classroom. Named Curatorial Teaching, this pedagogical perspective looks to identify the teaching practices most effective with students and iteratively modifying practice in order to optimize learning processes within a classroom community. This research study will chronicle the experiences of students' performance throughout a course sequence dedicated to student inquiry centralized in Writing Studies research.

- b. **Design/Procedures: Action research**

Students will produce:

1. 2 Reflective Journals detailing their experiences within 2 sequences of the course. **(APPENDIX F)**
 - a. SEQUENCE 1: Students will respond to their experiences between weeks 5-9 where they are introduced to a the conceptions of textual and generic analysis—concepts at the fore of Writing Studies practices—and invited to complete a writing analysis of a provided academic text.
 - b. SEQUENCE 2: Students will work individually or in pairs to discuss their experiences from weeks 9-15 where they are asked to take the practices introduced in weeks 5-9 and apply them to disciplinary writing within a Moravian College academic department of their choice. In addition, students will design and conduct mixed-methods research methodologies to develop a findings presentation on the department of their choice, shared with the rest of the class as the culminating presentation of the course and submitted in tandem with a 12-15 page report submitted via the Canvas LMS. These presentations will be added

to a private Google Site, accessible only to the classroom community to serve as a compendium of research.

2. Student deliverables include:
 - a. Informal Writing Assignments-Students will respond to a number of prompts housed within a larger, more informal, umbrella. This will occur throughout the semester and be specific to moments within our larger syllabus.
 - b. Disciplinary Writing Analysis-Students will undergo a mixed methods research process—facilitated within the classroom and through class readings—that will culminate in an analysis of student writing artifacts from three distinct academic disciplines. Students are expected to not only identify the features of each discipline’s discourse but also to think critically about why those differences exist, and how they contribute to one’s understanding of a discourse community.
 - c. Digital Response Videos-Students will be tasked with composing short videos detailing important components of the readings assigned in class as well as discuss their thoughts and opinions regarding different significant moments of the course. The ways in which students utilize the video medium is their choice as well as the topics they choose to cover when discussing the readings. Students are expected to engage with the content and the framework as they see fit, utilizing their technology (MacBooks and iPads) and synthesizing the information from the text.
 - d. Interview Questions and Transcripts-Teams of students will be tasked with interviewing at least one member of the department or discipline within which they are focusing. This interview must be at least 20 minutes long, must be transcribed and coded using the digital resource CAT, and can be used as an important primary source when composing the analysis.
 - e. Presentations-In addition to the deliverables of the Discovering a Discipline assignment, students will be required to create and deliver a presentation explaining the discipline they have selected to their fellow classmates so as to highlight the various options available on Moravian’s campus. This presentation will be assessed based on not only the quality of the content, but also on student’s use of the various techniques of public speaking presented in class. These presentations will be created digitally and added to larger compendium designed to serve as a guide for students to look to and understand different departments based on the presentations.

These deliverables will be analyzed throughout the course as measures of student performance as well as indicators for future interventions and changes in classroom practice.

Researcher will facilitate:

1. Audio-recorded/transcribed classwide dialogues with students held intermittently throughout the semester regarding classroom practices, content, and future modifications to classroom practices. **(Appendix C)**
 2. Consistent classwide observations detailing student experience within the curatorial teaching environment.
 - a. Our classroom community will engage in a series formative dialogues to define the qualities of positive student engagement and effective classroom practice. This list of qualities will become my observational criteria for the course. In sum, what we as a group identify as positive and negative behaviors will constitute good and bad behavior within my larger research design.
 3. A student survey—distributed weeks 3 and 15—that asks students fundamental questions regarding their writing experiences, attitudes, and understandings as well as a series of questions about the structure of the classroom/its successes and failures. **(APPENDIX D)**
- c. **Outline procedures/steps to reduce risks to subjects:**

My FYWS Writing Fellow will distribute and collect my IRB consent forms. These forms will be organized in a folder and kept in a locked cabinet in my office until the end of the semester. At semester's end I will access these IRB consent forms to recognize who has opted into the research (these students will then become my sample). The practices tied to this research are meant to enrich the class. Because they are classroom practices, I expect all students to engage with every aspect of the process. That said, I will only use the data provided by student who have given consent in my thesis work.

Students can choose to opt-out of the research at any time by contacting the Writing Fellow in the course who will be maintaining a private list of all students who have provided consent. If a student wishes to remove themselves from the study, the list will be updated and their contributions will be omitted from the research data.

Students who do provide consent will be given pseudonyms.

2. This research involves the following GROUP(S) vulnerable to risk. Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Subjects under the age of 18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Prisoners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pregnant women |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | People with mental, cognitive, intellectual, or physical disabilities |

Volunteer sample so vulnerable group membership may be unknown

Research Design Note: If you are asking for **volunteer participants**, you will not necessarily know whether or not your participants are under 18, pregnant and/or disabled. In fact, your volunteers may themselves not know whether they fall into one of these categories. Therefore, if you are asking for volunteer participants, you need to think carefully about whether or not your research project could adversely affect someone in any of these categories, and if so, how you might try to either screen out these individuals and/or design the project so that the risk to these individuals is minimized.

2a. If you checked any or all of the groups identified above, explain why you need to use the group and the methods you will use to minimize risk. If your research design proposes no special risks to these vulnerable individuals even if they happen to be included in your sample, please state why:

Because my research is focused on a pedagogical perspective within a First-Year Writing Seminar course that these individuals would have opted in already, my research design poses no additional/significant risk to them. Rather, this research exists above the normal confines of the course itself and presents no significant changes in terms of how the course will be conducted

3. This research might affect people with special vulnerabilities (for example, pregnant women, people with allergies, people taking some medications, people with cognitive impairments such as ADHD, etc.)

Research Design Note: Think carefully here again about whether or not your research design could negatively affect people with special vulnerabilities. For example, does your research design require so much concentration and/or computation that it might result in considerable stress for someone with a cognitive impairment? Are people completing your instrument in solitude or in a group setting? Might comparative performance result in excessive stress?

Yes
 No

If you checked "Yes", explain the methods you will use to minimize risk to these people.

4. Describe your subject pool including:
a. the intended number of subjects
b. subject characteristics/demographics

A. 14-22 Students

B. First-year college students attending Moravian college from various academic, social, and cultural backgrounds.

5. Describe in detail the methods you will use to recruit your subjects.

Students will be invited to share their experiences through my thesis research early within the first week of the semester. We will discuss the impacts and implications of the research before consent forms are distributed in the following weeks.

6. This research involves **deception** of subjects.

Yes
 No

If you checked “Yes”, describe the nature of the deception and your debriefing procedure. You will need to provide the debriefing statement with the full proposal submission. Even if the debriefing will be done orally, you need to submit the text of the verbal statement that will be read to participants.

7. Explain by whom and how the subjects will be informed of the purposes of this research project. *(Remember to provide a copy of the informed consent form with this proposal form.)*

WAM authorization forms will be distributed by me to WAM administrators preempting the Fall semester. **(APPENDIX B)**

Student Consent forms will be distributed by me, collected by my cooperating Writing Fellow, stored in a manilla folder and locked in a cabinet in my office until the end of the Fall Semester. **(APPENDIX A)**

8. This research collects information, which (check all that apply)

- deals with **sensitive aspects** from the participant's point of view.
- identifies the subject by **name** or **number codes**.
- might place the subject at **risk of liability** if made public.
- might place the subject's **financial standing or employability** at risk if made public.

Research Design Note: Think carefully about whether or not your research deals with topics that may be sensitive from the participant's point of view. Sometimes it is not obvious to the researcher that the subject of their research may be a sensitive topic for others.

If you checked any or all of the categories above, explain the methods you will use to

- a. safeguard the data you collect (you need to describe this safeguarding procedure in detail, including but not limited to a description of how the data will be protected (for example, in a locked cabinet), whom will have access to the data, and how and when the data will be destroyed)
- b. inform subjects of available support services (If your participants are drawn from the Moravian College community, please provide contact information for the Counseling Center, Campus Safety and the Health Center—contact information available on the HSIRB website. For participants drawn from other communities, please provide the comparable support service information.)
- c. minimize the risk of identification of subjects.

- A. All consent forms will be collected by Writing Fellow, stored within a folder, and housed within a locked cabinet. All student survey data will be housed within a private, password-protected, survey portal. All student produced work will be stored on Canvas LMS. All observational data will be stored in password protected files on researcher's laptop.
- B. Students will be introduced to various services through FYWS "Friday Sessions" already. I will support students and refer them to the needed services as appropriate.
- C. All students will be given pseudonyms. Student work will be deidentified.

Appendix C: WAM Authorization Form



WAM Authorization Form

Project: Peer Review in Practice: Reflective-Responsive-Revised

Researcher: Chris Hassay

Employment Affiliation: MAT Fellow

Location of the Study: Moravian College

Supervising University Professor: Dr. Joseph Shosh & Dr. Tristan Gleason

Purpose of the Study: To assess the validity of a First-Year Writing Seminar that achieves the aims of Curatorial Teaching and serves as a positive course for the development of student writers in this First-Year Writing Seminar (FYWS) course.

Procedures to be Followed: Students will first engage in a classwide dialogue about student conduct and classroom practices that will culminate in a classwide artifact of observational criteria. Students will complete a survey at the beginning and end of the course detailing effective classroom practices. Students will complete written reflections where they will critique their experience and offer suggestions for future modifications.

All students will engage in the same classroom practices. Only data gathered from participants who have provided consent on the student form will be used in the larger research findings. Participants may withdraw at any time without penalty.

Benefits of the Study: *For students,* this process will invite students to think more actively about about writing and classroom practices at the college level. As a participant in the larger classwide discussion, students can more actively

guide the focus of the course in relation to what they find most valuable/helpful. *For faculty*, this process will outline best practices both in agency based teaching and Writing-about-Writing pedagogy in a First-Year Writing context.

Persons who will have access to the records, data, tapes, or other documentation:

Chris Hassay (researcher).

I understand that participation in this project is voluntary, and I understand that a student may withdraw from this study at any time by notifying the researcher.

Statement of Confidentiality:

The participation of the students in this project is confidential. Only the researcher will have access to the data.

Please check the appropriate box below and sign the form:

- I give permission for my program to participate in this project. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. I have read this form and understand it.
- I do not give permission for my school to participate in this project.

Appendix D: Student Assent Form



Student Assent Form

Dear Student,

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted by Chris Hassay. This research involves asking Linc 101 J students to conduct and reflect upon an iterative series of classroom practices with their classmates that are identified through a series of research practices; the information you provide will be used within the Education Master's Program at Moravian college by Hassay as he endeavors to ensure that students are developing writing practices that are both valuable and responsive to the unique needs of students. Participation in this study involves regular classroom practices that everyone will engage in throughout the semester—your participation in this study allows for your experiences to be recorded. You may ask me questions about this research at any time. This research has been approved by Moravian faculty.

This study will run throughout the 2018-19 Fall Semester in the Linc 101 J classroom. During the study, Chris will collect various forms of data to determine whether classroom practices was successful. These are as follows: student produced writing; student survey responses; student reflections; observation notes; and shared classroom artifacts.

Personal Costs and Benefits

Aside from your time, there are no costs for taking part in the study. You may find our reflective discussion beneficial to your development as a student and a burgeoning writer. This process will invite you to think more actively about writing and classroom practices at the college level. As a participant in the larger classwide discussion, students can more actively guide the focus of the course in relation to what they find most valuable/helpful.

Confidentiality

The raw data will not be accessible to anyone except Hassay. The researcher will not include your name in any report about this study. If you share materials (sample writing, writing assignment sheets, rubrics, etc.), they will be attributed to a pseudonym unless you agree that your name may be used.

Voluntary Participation & Stopping the Session

Your participation is purely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty. If you decide you do not want to continue, you can simply tell the Writing Fellow. If you choose to withdraw from the project, we will exclude all of your responses and information.

Your Signature

By signing this form, I affirm that I have read the information contained in the form, that the study has been explained to me and that my questions have been answered prior to my taking part in this study. I do not give up any of my legal rights by signing this form.

Name (Printed)

Participant's Signature

Date signed

Statement by person obtaining consent

I certify that I have explained the research study to the person who has agreed to participate, and that he or she has been informed of the purpose, the procedures, the possible risks and potential benefits associated with participation in this study. Any questions raised have been answered to the participant's satisfaction.

Name of study personnel

Study personnel Signature

Date signed