UNIT ONE MAJOR ASSIGNMENT: GENRE ANALYSIS & RESEARCH PROPOSAL

M1a: Genre Analysis

Your analysis will focus on the genres unique to the community, the methods of communication used to distribute the genres, the persons in the community who interact with the genres and other texts, and the situations to which the genres respond or which they generate or initiate. The goal of this paper is to find something specific about the written communications within the community that can serve as an area for further research. Use the course readings to model ways of talking about these areas. You will need to collect samples of genres from members of community (if they have a website, you might find these online). As you conduct your analysis, include questions such as these in your investigation:

- Who are the “stakeholders,” or community members who interact with the community’s genres? Who controls the lexis (specialized language) and/or genres in this community? What other kinds of authority do they gain from mastery over the texts?
- How do group members learn to write specific genres within the community—what is the literacy process? Who controls (teaches, determines, withholds) this literacy?
- What are the recognizable, repeating textual forms (genres) group members use to communicate with each other? What are the “genre sets” used by your group of stakeholders? 1

Look at the characteristics of one specific, significant genre used by your stakeholders. Ask questions such as:

- What rhetorical claims (ethos, pathos, logos) do they value? What kinds of evidence are important to them? Why do you think this is so? 2
- What kind of formatting is a community expectation? If they use citations, how do they handle them?
- What tone and style is appropriate for them? Why do you think this is so?
- Do they prefer one medium of presentation over another (print or digital, for example)? Why?

Genre Analysis Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre Rhetor &amp; Audience Analysis</th>
<th>Genre Form &amp; Action Analysis</th>
<th>College-level Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Talks about genres and genre sets in terms of the class readings, looking at how genres help the community accomplish its goals. Gives a clear idea of why these particular genres or genre sets look and behave as they do, and what kinds of community activities they respond to or promote.</td>
<td>Uses citations and examples from class readings to support ideas. Uses this support material to draw conclusions and demonstrate an understanding of unit concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Gives an idea of why these particular genres or genre sets look and behave as they do, but does not go into detail to help explain how they help the community accomplish its goals.</td>
<td>Provides support from at least one class reading, but does not use this material to connect to ideas from personal observations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Provides examples of genres and talks about what they look like, but does not describe in terms of course readings.</td>
<td>Does not provide support for observations. Does not reference class readings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Genre Analysis should be formatted according to MLA criteria (check the Everyday Writer for guidelines), and 2-4 pages in length. It is due online January 24 by 11:59 pm. Submission of this assignment is a requirement for passing ENC 1102.

1 Devitt, Bawarshi, Reiff 551
2 See Lunsford Chapter 13
M1b: Research Proposal

The last paper you submitted provided a good idea about the kinds of writing taking place in your community. Now it’s time to decide on a specific focus for your research. What issues did you find relating to the different kinds of literacies in the community, or about the use of genres to conduct community activities? What about any situations regarding who has authority over the genres and how other community members respond? What kinds of debatable, researchable questions can you ask about this area of interest?

Process: Your job is to show that you have done these steps:
1. Explain what makes this question or problem worth further investigation (anticipate the “So what?” question.) Briefly consider why this question or problem has not been resolved. Consider what you hope to learn by investigating this question or problem. What value do you hope to provide to others who may be interested?
2. Conduct some very initial exploration of your problem or question (you can draw on your genre analysis work here). Determine who else is talking about this problem or issue (it could be in a different context) and who else cares about this issue besides just you. How do you know they are interested? What evidence have you seen?
3. Conduct an initial search for sources that you might use in your investigation. Consider both scholarly and popular, with the balanced determined by the nature of your question/problem. You don’t have to read these now, but provide a list of what you plan to read.
4. Lay out a schedule for your research. Allow specific time frames for each part of the process, and note due dates not just for this class, but for your other courses as well. Think about the kind of primary research you might conduct—how will you build it into your schedule? You will also need time for data analysis and revision. A good way to envision this is to set it up on a calendar template, such as the ones here: http://www.wincalendar.com/Calendar-and-Schedule-Templates

Please note that a proposal leads to preliminary research, and that your question(s) or issues will more than likely change as you learn more about your topic. Thus, consider this not an inflexible plan, but rather a starting point for the discovery process that real research entails.

Research Proposal Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question/Issue Justification</th>
<th>Investigation Progress</th>
<th>Outcome Consideration</th>
<th>Potential Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides relevance to the field being studied and shows clear relation to a concerned audience</td>
<td>Documents the discovery process that led to current thinking</td>
<td>Clearly explains expected outcomes and consequences of research</td>
<td>Identifies a variety of relevant sources that will potentially help investigations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides a reason for the research; lacks relation to outside parties</td>
<td>Includes steps taken but lacks sense of discovery as process</td>
<td>Identifies expected outcomes; does not extend into foreseen consequences</td>
<td>Lists sources that are marginally relevant or limited in scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research topic is presented as naturally important or without the need to support</td>
<td>Research process consists of in-class activities or little initiative</td>
<td>Outcomes of the study are absent, unclear, or impractical</td>
<td>Sources are absent, irrelevant, or inappropriate to the question/problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The primary objective of this assignment is to show that you’ve identified a clear research problem or question and have decided on a plan of action for exploring it. The essence of a proposal is to persuade your audience (your instructor in this case) that this research is important and should take place.

Format your proposal according to MLA protocols, and include citations and a Works Cited page as appropriate.

Your Research Proposal should be 2 - 4 pages in length. It is due online January 31 by 11:59 pm. Submission of this assignment is a requirement for passing ENC 1102.