

Report: English 2010 Portfolio Assessment Pilot

Background. In the academic year 2003-04, a committee of English Department faculty members labored painstakingly and collaboratively to develop a set of outcomes for English 1010, 2010, and 2100, as well as a set of overarching outcomes for the entire composition sequence (see Appendix A, “Outcomes for the Composition Sequence”). Our premise was to describe the outcomes of the two courses as we were then teaching them; the outcomes have, however, also inspired a certain amount of curricular development where we could see a gap between the current curriculum and the outcomes we desired. Since that time, the outcomes have appeared on the published syllabi of these courses, and we have used them to support and guide the training and support we offer our adjuncts. As with any set of outcomes, however, we should also acknowledge that we cannot judge the achievement of these outcomes course-wide without some sort of course-wide assessment. Moreover, since composition as a discipline does not generally subscribe to content-oriented tests, the method to assess these outcomes needs to be holistic.

For more than a year, the published curriculum for English 2010 has culminated in a final course portfolio (see Appendix B, English 2010 Curriculum posted for the 2005-06 academic year). For this portfolio, students select, from the multiple pieces of writing they have produced during the course, several pieces that they would like to revise in order to demonstrate their achievement of the course objectives. The preceding statement, however, without doubt overstates the uniformity of the practices of the many instructors who teach English 2010, as well as the success with which such portfolios may demonstrate the course outcomes.

Several factors inspired this assessment pilot: the recent accreditation visit at SLCC, which asked the whole college to focus on assessment; the department’s general interest in assessment; and the department’s tentative exploration of the idea of electronic portfolios.

Goals of the Study. We aimed to find out two things: first, whether, at the completion of English 2010, students demonstrated proficiency in the three most relevant College Learning Outcomes, as follows:

- 2. Communicate effectively.**
- 4. Think critically.**
- 5. Develop the knowledge and skills to be civically engaged, and/or to work with others in a professional and constructive manner.**

Second, we wanted to know whether students had substantially achieved proficiency at the course outcomes.

Method. After some discussion between Stephen Ruffus, Ron Christiansen (who leads work in support of English 1010), and me, it appeared that an assessment of English 2010 would be the most straightforward, largely because the course portfolio assignment was already in place. This meant that we already had in place a sort of summative

performance on the part of English 2010 students to assess, using relatively well-established course outcomes.

English Department members Brittany Stephenson and Jennifer Courtney, as well as experienced adjunct instructor Rebecca Miner and myself, were the participant-investigators. We read the portfolios from our own sections of English 2010 (no one read her own students' portfolios). This amounted to 177 student portfolios from 10 sections (out of a total of about 67 sections of English 2010 taught in Spring semester). We used a holistic scoring method, using five traits, a six point rating scale, and a double reading protocol (see Appendix C, "English 2010 Portfolio Assessment Pilot"). This meant that each portfolio was read and scored independently by two readers. If the score differed by more than two points, a third reader would adjudicate.

We prepared students for their participation in the study by notifying them that, though we would be reading and scoring their work, they would be held harmless by the results, since the goal of this assessment was to measure, to the extent that we could, the success of the course and its curriculum in helping students to achieve the course outcomes. We tried to promote some consistency in the substance of the portfolios by encouraging students to select and revise work that would represent their achievement with respect to the outcomes. We encouraged students to choose four to six pieces of writing to include in the portfolio.

We used the following five traits to assess each portfolio:

1. The student writer takes a point of view on an issue.
2. The student writer uses and documents sources appropriately for the writing task.
3. The student writer can analyze effectively, using and citing appropriate evidence.
4. The student writer adapts his/her writing to address specific situations.
5. The student writes persuasively

Data from the study. Most readings either coincided or had a one point differential. Twenty-three portfolios had a two point differential in the two ratings, and only one portfolio had a three point differential. Despite some significant differences in the types of assignments students from the various sections included in their portfolios, we feel this shows we had a high degree of reliability in the readings.

Twenty-three portfolios had a combined score of eleven or twelve (nine at twelve; fourteen at eleven).

Sixty-four portfolios had a combined score of nine or ten (thirty-four at nine; thirty at ten).

Seventy-four portfolios had a combined score of seven or eight (forty-eight at eight; twenty-six at seven).

Fifteen portfolios had a combined score of five or six (ten at six; five at five).

After discussion, we agreed that a score of eleven or twelve represents high proficiency at the traits measured. We scored thirteen percent (of 176 portfolios) at this level.

A score of nine or ten represents above average proficiency at the traits measured. We scored thirty-six percent at this level.

A score of seven or eight represents average proficiency at the traits measured. We scored forty-two percent at this level.

A score of five or six represents below average proficiency at the traits measured. We scored nine percent at this level.

Discussion of the data. In terms of the overall assessment, we felt that the evidence, even given its limitations, suggests that the curriculum does a pretty good job of helping students to meet the outcomes of English 2010. Ninety-one percent of the portfolios we read achieved average, above-average, or high proficiency at the course outcomes. Even if we only include scores of eight or above as having achieved proficiency, we found that seventy-seven percent, or 135 portfolios, were at this level.

Because of the limitations of the study (see below), much of what we feel we learned from the study is qualitative. For instance, we felt that we were able to note a small but significant difference in student performance in the traits having to do with academic writing, which suggests to us that we may not have a consensus view of how important it is to integrate research-based writing, citation, and analysis into all of the writing students do in the course. We agreed, then, that one of the major things those working on the course should do is build more specific language about these matters, including a discussion of how students should document their sources in the publicly-oriented genre pieces they produce in the course. We also agree that the course should retain its focus on genre play, so that this work in more fully articulating student outcomes with regard to academic traits would represent an enrichment of the course rather than a shift away from its current strengths. To this end, we believe that we should focus on how to help students bridge between academic writing and more publicly-oriented writing, with help in understanding how they might represent their research in flexible and adaptable citation practices being a key ability in making this bridge.

We also agreed that a difficulty in reading and rating student work, even holistically, arose from the fact that the traits we named did not correspond fully with the course outcomes. The next time we assess English 2010, we agreed that we should use the outcomes more directly, rather than synthesizing them, as we did in generating the traits.

Some factors potentially affecting the reliability of our study included the fact that, though we specified four to six pieces in a portfolio, some students included more pieces. When this occurred, we suspected that we had a tendency to rate those portfolios slightly higher. Students occasionally turned in writing from other courses, which raised issues for some of us. We agreed that we should discuss this matter and come to some decision or policy to govern it. This would be particularly important if we begin to assess on a larger scale. Finally, some students submitted whole projects, with multiple pieces of writing, whereas others included pieces selected from varying projects; students who

included pieces that went together tended to be rated slightly higher. This may help us think about how to teach the portfolio-making process, a matter which, again, will be more important if the English department decides to assess English 2010 portfolios on a larger scale, or for higher stakes. We thought that proficiency might be even higher than the study suggests it already is, if we had had a more consistent definition of the portfolio and had offered more consistent advice to them.

We found that some issues arose that were specific to online instruction of English 2010. One instructor found that, since students in her technology-enhanced sections of English 2010 prepared and posted several analytic assignments as online activities, they tended not to include them in their portfolios. It may be, therefore, that teachers would need to be sensitive to a possible tendency by students not to see some of their online postings as writing, susceptible to revision and improvement. We also agreed that alert instructors could correct for this tendency, in part by varying the types of activities students prepared as online postings, and in part by carefully situating online writing as full pieces of writing, just as the pieces they prepared for review on paper are.

We agreed that the process of planning and carrying out this assessment had proved extremely useful to each of us as instructors. We learned a great deal simply by reading and discussing the student writing from our respective classes, and it helped us to identify areas for strengthening our instruction, thereby, we hope, helping our students to achieve more proficiency. We endorse doing this kind of assessment for this purpose alone. We especially feel that conducting this sort of holistic reading could be a useful activity in training our part-time faculty.

Limits of the study and suggestions for future assessments. Though we took precautions against biased readings (for instance, no one read her own students' work; we normed our readings in an initial session; we tried to observe similar preparatory protocols in each of the sections), it's obvious that this study isn't random enough to allow us to draw large generalizations about how effective our curriculum is at helping students achieve the course outcomes. We suggest that, in the future, we take a more randomized, and perhaps a larger, sample of sections.

In our discussion, we agreed that it will be important to include a more randomized sample, in part because we can't tell what's happening in sections of English 2010 that may be being taught at significant variation from the published curriculum. This, in turn, certainly may skew the results. We also agreed that the ideal situation for any course with as many instructors as teach English 2010 is to have enough coherence that we can justifiably claim that we are teaching specific outcomes, but enough variability that we continue to come up with good ideas across the faculty for improving the course.

We all felt the pressure of reading these portfolios at the end of the semester, when we all needed to be reading our own students' work and preparing final evaluations. We suggest, therefore, that if the assessment is of the *course* and not of individual students' work, we postpone the holistic readings until after final grades are submitted.

We believe that the English Department should discuss the future of portfolio assessment. Does the department want the portfolio to become an exit assessment? If so, then we also need to have a discussion of what would constitute curricular coherence, and what degree of flexibility we think is appropriate as individual instructors teach the course to their strengths and interests. The department should also discuss what kinds of resources we would like to obtain to support the large task of assessing student work in this kind of blind, holistic assessment. We might begin by investigating such assessments at other colleges to see what kinds of resources others have obtained.

Appendix A, Outcomes for English 1010/2010/2100

English 1010/2010/2100 Outcomes

Below are the outcome statements for the Composition Sequence at Salt Lake Community College. First are the Overarching Goals for the Composition Sequence at SLCC, closely based on the *WPA Statement of Outcomes for First Year Writing Instruction*. These outcomes represent the overarching goals for writing courses at SLCC. Following these outcomes are the course specific outcomes for English 1010 and 2010/2100. It is expected that students in 2010/2100 are proficient in all of the English 1010 outcomes as well.

OVERARCHING GOALS FOR COMPOSITION SEQUENCE AT SLCC

By the end of the Composition Sequence at SLCC, students should be able to:

Rhetorical Knowledge—

- Respond appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations
- Focus on a purpose
- Respond to the needs of different audiences
- Understand how genres shape reading and writing
- Adopt appropriate voice, tone and diction.
- Use conventions of format and structure appropriate to the rhetorical situation ‘

Critical Thinking, Reading and Writing

- Understand writing assignments as consisting of multiple tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources
- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking and communicating
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others
- Understand the various relationships among language, knowledge and power.

Processes

- Understand writing as an open process that permits writers to use later invention and re-thinking to revise their work
- Be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text.
- Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading
- Learn to balance the advantages of relying on others with the responsibility of doing their part
- Learn to critique their own and others’ works
- Use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences.

Conventions

- Develop knowledge of genre conventions
- Practice appropriate means of documenting their work
- Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling

ENGLISH 1010 OUTCOMES

By the end of English 1010, students should be able to:

- Recognize rhetorical strategies, including purpose, audience and genre in a variety of texts.
- Make rhetorical decisions for specific audiences, emphasizing informed college audiences.
- Adapt their voice, tone and diction to specific audiences.
- Engage with multiple texts using writing strategies such as summary, analysis, and synthesis.
- Use their own perspectives to respond to texts in a thoughtful and critical manner.
- Effectively incorporate other texts into their own writing as they develop their analyses and arguments.
- Utilize a variety of writing strategies (invention, revision, drafting) to manage assignments effectively.
- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of their own writing processes.
- Critically and substantially revise their own writing.
- Provide useful feedback to peers' writing and make effective decisions about how to use peer feedback for their own writing.
- Utilize traditional and electronic mediums to communicate effectively with their peers and instructors.
- Understand all writing situations include conventions that must be addressed to write effectively.
- Understand the concepts of appropriate citation strategies and know how to correctly use such strategies in their writing.
- Be critical readers of their own writing in order to control the surface features of their writing.

ENGLISH 2010/2100 OUTCOMES

By the end of English 2010/2100, students should be able to:

- Analyze both academic and other writing situations.
- Write in various genres.
- Adapt their writing effectively to a given rhetorical situation and purpose, taking into account audience needs and expectations, and genre possibilities and constraints.
- Research, conceptualize rhetorically, and make rhetorical decisions within virtual writing environments.
- Make a presentation of a project.
- Analyze various genres to identify different rhetorical elements such as argument, language, context, etc.
- Read for underlying assumptions that support various arguments and positions.
- Adapt the conventions of argument to a variety of genres.
- Write with an awareness of the ethical dimensions of writing.
- Make effective and practical writing decisions that take into account the ways writing circulates in society.
- Adapt their processes to a variety of genres.
- Manage multi-stage, multi-dimensional writing tasks.
- Use the collaborative dimensions of writing to best meet their own writing purposes.
- Work proficiently within the formal conventions of various genres.
- Design and format documents according to conventions.
- Document sources appropriately for a given genre or discourse.
- Alter and adapt the formal conventions of various genres as needed for new writing situations.
- Write with a minimum of surface error.

Appendix B, Published Curriculum for English 2010, Academic Year 2005-06

[Note: This is the curriculum that we published on the department's English 2010 webpage for the 2005-06 academic year. It was the curriculum we presented to the part-time faculty, and it was the curriculum we supported through our training. As a result of our visits to part-time faculty classrooms, it was, as near as we can tell, the curriculum that nearly all the part-time faculty followed.]

Assignment 1, Genre + Rhetorical Analysis

In this assignment, you will work in one of two possible genres, either the *letter* or the *public document*; you also write a two- to three-page *rhetorical analysis essay*.

For the genre piece (either the letter or the public document), you are to think about a possible public context for such a document. Write the letter or public document as if it were going to enter the public context—that is, have a specific public audience in mind; consider what kind of letter or public document might actually reach that audience, considering your own position and that of your audience; organize and design it so that it would be acceptable and persuasive to the audience.

For the two- to three-page rhetorical analysis essay, you are to choose a source relevant to your genre piece—some document, article, website, or other source you found in doing the research for your genre piece. Using the following questions, analyze the rhetorical situation of your source:

- What is the context of issues? What do you know about the topic? What issues does the topic raise? Is there a larger debate, discussion, or controversy already going on? What seems to be at stake?
- Who is the writer? What do you know about the writer's background, credibility, knowledge of the topic, beliefs, and social allegiances?
- What is the publication? What do you know about its intended readers, reputability, political slant, and the topics it covers?
- What is the call to write? Why is the writer addressing the issue and taking a position at this particular time? Is there some sense of urgency involved? How does the writer identify the significance of the issues involved?
- What is the writer's purpose? What is he or she trying to accomplish? Is the purpose stated explicitly or implicitly?
- Who is the intended audience? Is the writer addressing one group of readers or more than one? What kind of relationship is the writer trying to establish with readers? What assumptions about readers does the writer seem to make?
- How does the writer use language? What is the writer's tone? What does the writer's word choice show about his or her assumptions about readers? Does the writer use specialized terms or slang? Are there memorable figures of speech? Does the writer stereotype?
- What is your evaluation of the rhetorical effectiveness? Does he accomplish his purposes? What constraints, if any, qualify the writing's effectiveness?

Write your essay by summarizing the main line of reasoning. Use your answers to the above questions to help you write your essay, but your essay's analysis should be an integrated discussion and not just a list of answers. Conclude with a well-supported evaluation of the writing's rhetorical effectiveness.

Assignment 2: Genre + Argument Analysis

In this assignment, you are to work in one of three possible genres: the *profile*, the *report*, or the *commentary*. In addition, you are to write two- to three-page *argument analysis essay*.

For the genre piece (either the profile, the report, or the commentary), you are to think about a possible public context for such a document. Write the profile, report, or commentary as if it were going to enter the public context—that is, have a specific public audience in mind; consider what kind of profile, report, or commentary might actually reach that audience, considering your own position and that of your audience; organize and design it so that it would be acceptable and persuasive to the audience.

For the two- to three-page argument analysis essay, you are to choose a source relevant to your genre piece—some document, article, website, or other source that you found in doing the research for your genre piece. Using the following questions, analyze your source's argument:

- Summarize the argument. What is the main claim?
- Identify the type of issue—substantiation, evaluation, policy.
- Describe the context of issues. Is the argument part of an ongoing debate, discussion, or controversy? What positions have people taken in the past?
- Describe the intended readers and explain how the argument seeks to influence them (to take action, support or oppose a policy, reconsider an established fact or belief, make a value judgment).
- Analyze the rhetorical stance. How does the writer integrate ethos, pathos, and logos?
- Analyze the parts of the argument—claim, evidence, enabling assumptions, backing, differing views, qualifiers—and how the writer puts them together.
- Examine any strategies used to negotiate differences.
- Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the argument. Keep in mind that the goal of argument is to clarify reasonable differences as well as to convince others.

Your essay should summarize the argument, then analyze the argument. End with a well-supported evaluation of the argument's effectiveness.

Assignment 3: Genre + Visual Rhetoric Analysis + Annotated Bibliography

In this assignment, you are to work in one of two possible genres, the *proposal* or the *review*. In addition, you are to write a two- to three-page *visual rhetoric analysis*, as well as an *annotated bibliography*.

For the genre piece (either the proposal or the review), you are to think about a possible public context for such a document. Write the proposal or the review as if it were going to enter the public context—that is, have a specific public audience in mind; consider what kind of proposal or review might actually reach that audience, considering your own position and that of your audience; organize and design it so that it would be acceptable and persuasive to the audience.

For the two- to three-page visual rhetoric analysis essay, you are to choose a source relevant to your genre piece—some document, article, website, or other source that you found in doing the research for your genre piece. Using the following questions, analyze your source's visual rhetoric:

- Describe the document. What type of document is it?
- Describe the specific ways the document uses both text and visual elements. Are there charts or graphs? Headings? Images, such as logos?
- How does the document use visual design to make its point? To create its argument? To direct the attention of the reader?
- How does the document use visual design to persuade the reader?
- How well does the document use the principles of visual design (see pp. 617-627)?
- What is the occasion that called for the document you're analyzing? How well, in your estimation, does the document respond to that occasion?
- What is the document's purpose?
- Who are the apparent intended readers of the document?
- How is the document organized? If it is a web page, what is its structure (see pp. 639-641)?

Using your answers to the above questions, write an essay in which you analyze the visual rhetoric of your source. Begin with a description of the document; end with a well-supported analysis of the document's visual effectiveness, given its rhetorical purpose and situation.

The annotated bibliography is an academic genre. In this genre, you cite the sources you've used, as you would with a regular Works Cited page for an academic assignment. However, you also summarize and assess each source, as well as write an introduction and a conclusion to the bibliography. I will provide you with an example. You should aim for 4-6 sources. You can see examples of, and guidelines for, this document on the English 2010 website.

Assignment 4: Rhetorical Situation Assessments/ Deployment Plans

For each of the genre pieces you've written, for assignments 1, 2, and 3, write a one-page written assessment of the rhetorical situation in which you're writing, as you see it, and your plan to deploy the piece of writing, if you were actually to put it into circulation.

You might use the following questions to help you think about your assessment/plan for each genre piece:

- To whom am I speaking in this piece?
- Is my intended audience likely to accept the kinds of statements I make in this piece from me? What credibility do I have with this audience?
- Have I used evidence adequate to my task, given my audience? Have I documented that evidence appropriately, given my audience, the genre, and the circumstances?
- If I am trying to reach a particular audience, who might be able to help me do so?
- With whom do I attempt to align myself in order to write more effectively?
- How will people get my document—that is, how will the document circulate?
- If this document were actually to circulate, who would pay for its production?
- How will my document be distributed? Who would need to be on board for that to happen?
- What do I hope will happen as a result of my having written?

While I want to see these assessments/plans in your preliminary portfolio, you might also usefully see them as a preparation for further revision.

Preliminary Portfolio

Contents

Your preliminary portfolio is due [date]. This portfolio should contain all the writing you have done for the course thus far. Revise this work to the extent that you're able, remembering that this is a preliminary, formative assessment and not a final grade. At a minimum, you should present all your work in clean copy. Include drafts only if you think it would be useful to me as I review your work.

For your convenience, I have listed the assigned writing below:

- Assignment 1: Genre piece (letter or public document)
- Assignment 1: Rhetorical analysis of a source
- Assignment 2: Genre piece (profile, report, or commentary)
- Assignment 2: Argument analysis of a source
- Assignment 3: Genre piece (proposal or review)
- Assignment 3: Analysis of visual rhetoric of a source
- Assignment 3: Annotated bibliography
- Assignment 4: Rhetorical Situation Assessments/ Deployment Plans
- Learning journal entries

In addition to the above, please write

- a cover letter addressed to me, in which you assess the work you have done thus far, and project the kinds of revisions on which you would like to work in the latter half of the semester.

I will schedule times for consultation in order to discuss your preliminary portfolios with you the week of [dates].

Assignment 5: Collaborative Community Writing Campaign

For the Collaborative Community Writing Campaign, you will work with one or more other writers

- to identify a community need or an issue of concern to the community;
- and to develop pieces of writing to address that community need or concern, with a public aim.

This set of pieces of writing will represent your collective rhetorical knowledge of a public issue, will create knowledge resources for that issue, and will enter the public discussion of the issue in some substantive ways. Your work should be ambitious, commensurate with what you should know from having worked through the first several assignments.

Your work will take place on several fronts. I have detailed below various aspects of that work, starting with:

A Research Project Proposal. For this part of the work, you and your partners will propose to me a research project—that is, you will propose a project for this assignment. See the specific criteria below.

The Community Writing Campaign. For this part of the work, you and your partners will produce several pieces of writing to meet a public need or concern. You should aim to produce writing in a variety of genres, making certain that your choice of genre for each individual piece is rhetorically appropriate, given what you hope that piece of writing will accomplish for a focused audience. In other words, the same criteria that have held for your writing up to this point still apply: these pieces must be *fully rhetorical* and *deeply knowledgeable* about the topic and about your audience(s).

In addition to the campaign itself, each group will be responsible for a **Genre Presentation**. See specific criteria below. You will choose one of the genres that you're using in your public writing campaign, and demonstrate its features within that setting. You will do this partly by showing your work-in-progress on that genre, and partly by showing one or more pieces of writing in that genre that you've found as you've done research on your campaign's topic.

You will produce an **Annotated Bibliography**, one that includes all the sources you used in your work. You may, of course, frame this part of the work as the standard academic genre, but again, if you see other ways to fulfill the same genre *activity* in another way more appropriate to your project, please discuss the possibilities with me. For instance, if your Community Writing Campaign includes a website, you may wish to frame your annotated bibliography as a set of annotated links on the page.

Finally, each group will write a **Cover Letter** for the entire project. Since this letter will be collaborative, you should plan to consider together, near the end of the project, what aspects of the project on which you'd like me to focus as I evaluate your work.

You should feel free during the remaining weeks of the semester to consult with me regularly, either as groups or as individuals. You may also wish to consult with me about your individual course portfolios. As you can see from the schedule below, I have some time set aside for instruction and for presentations, but by and large, much of our time during these last weeks will be yours to use for collaborative work.

I have asked for a **Progress Report** (see due date below, and attached criteria). In this report, you should account for your accomplishments to date, your immediate challenges, and your plans for carrying out the remainder of your work.

Project Proposal Criteria

For the Project Proposal, you should meet the following criteria:

1. Identify the community need or issue. Tell as much as you know about the particular sector of the community that you intend to address with your writing. What will be the rhetorical situation of your writing, insofar as you know it at this point?
2. Identify the pieces of writing you plan to do as part of the campaign.
3. Make clear how the writing you propose will address the community need or issue. How will it help? What effect do you intend the writing to have?
4. Identify the research you intend to do. You should plan to do both topic- or issue-based research as well as community-based research.
5. Identify any rhetorical obstacles you must address, such as the fact that you are college students and not necessarily experts. How do you intend to address your constraints?

Your proposal should be addressed to me in memorandum format:

TO: Instructor Name

FROM: The Group

DATE:

SUBJECT: Project Proposal

You should use section headings to identify the parts of your proposal. You can use the above questions/criteria as guidelines or create your own section headings.

I will use your project proposal as a basis for giving you initial feedback on the project, so the more information you can give me about your proposed project, the more helpful I can be.

Criteria for Progress Report

Progress reports are a genre typical in many settings. They are a means of communicating to a supervisor or other authority figure what work has already been accomplished on a long-range project, what work remains to be done, and to assess the obstacles, if any, to finishing the project as planned.

Your *progress report* should be written collaboratively. It should be written as a memorandum, addressed to me, and it should be typed. You should plan to explain to me each of the following components: what you've accomplished; what remains to be accomplished; and your plans for finishing the remaining work. The progress report should be about a page long.

Guidelines for the Genre Presentation

For this presentation, you will choose one of the genres that you're using in your public writing campaign, and demonstrate how it works within that public setting. You will do this partly by showing your work-in-progress on that genre, and partly by showing one or more pieces of writing in that genre that you've found as you've done research on your campaign's topic.

As you plan your presentation, you should keep in mind the following:

For the piece or pieces you've found in your research:

- How does the piece demonstrate the features of the genre?
- What other genre activity seems to be going on in the piece?
- To whom does the piece seem to address itself?
- How does the genre shape the relationship between the writer and the audience?
- How has the piece circulated in its public setting?
- What are the strengths and limitations of the piece in terms of its genre—that is, how does the genre help the piece achieve its communicative goals, and how, if at all, does the genre constrain the piece in achieving these goals?

For your work-in-progress:

- Why did you choose this genre for this piece?
- What are your communicative goals for the piece?
- What features of the genre seem to be consonant with your communicative goals?
- How much credibility or authority do you as a group have as writers within this genre? Within this public setting? What strategies do you have for negotiating a more credible, authoritative stance? How does the genre help or hurt?
- What opportunities does the genre allow you? What constraints?

You should plan for a ten to fifteen minute presentation. The group can decide how the presentation will go—whether everyone will have a formal part, or whether fewer than all of the members of the group have an active part in the presentation. Make sure that you can make the context of the documents clear: this means giving the class a strong sense of the topic, the audience, and the scope of the documents. If you would like any assistance in making copies, transparencies, or arranging for other forms of presentation such as Power Point, please let me know. I will ask you ahead of time if you need any help, but please feel free to consult me about any aspect of your presentations.

Final Portfolio: Guidelines

For a complete preliminary portfolio, you turned in the following pieces of writing:

- Assignment 1: Genre piece (letter or public document)
- Assignment 1: Rhetorical analysis of a source
- Assignment 2: Genre piece (profile, report, or commentary)
- Assignment 2: Argument analysis of a source
- Assignment 3: Genre piece (proposal or review)
- Assignment 3: Analysis of visual rhetoric of a source
- Assignment 3: Annotated bibliography
- Assignment 4: Rhetorical Situation Assessments/ Deployment Plans

During the latter half of the semester, you've worked on a collaborative community writing campaign that includes the following pieces of writing:

- Project Proposal
- Genre pieces (various)
- Annotated Bibliography
- Genre Presentation

For your final portfolio, you should choose from among the above pieces. While the choice is yours as to what you include, I will suggest that you might want to balance analytic, academic writing with writing oriented toward public settings. You may also want to consider including some collaborative writing, to show what you can do in that setting. A piece taken from the collaborative project need not be completely authored by you; in fact, including an explanatory comment about your role in the production of a collaborative piece would make a very interesting part of a portfolio.

The number of pieces should be substantial enough so that I can base a full assessment of your writing, both in its present quality and in its improvement. I've suggested to you that you might aim for four to six pieces of writing. You do not need to—nor should you—include every piece of writing you've done in the class. You should think about *variety* and *selectivity*: variety, to show me your range as a writer, and selectivity, to choose what you think is best.

You should also write a substantial cover letter, addressed to me and signed by you, for the portfolio. The purpose of this cover letter is to interpret what is in your portfolio for me. At this point, since I am evaluating you, your goal is to help me to see what you want me to see in the portfolio. I will always read with my own goals in mind, but your cover letter can help me to see what I might miss—what you want me to see. In the cover letter, explain anything you think I should know as I read and respond to your portfolio.

Your portfolio is due in class on [date]. I will ask you at that time to set an appointment for a final conference with me, if you would like feedback on your portfolio. Otherwise, I will read and grade the portfolio with minimal comments. Please let me know if you would like to make other arrangements than these for getting feedback on your portfolio.

Please remember that we will meet a final time during finals week, on [date], for about an hour, to share your collaborative projects. At that time, you will turn in the final projects to me.

Appendix C: Design of Portfolio Assessment Pilot

2010 Portfolio Assessment Project

What we're trying to assess: whether students have substantially accomplished the outcomes of the course as we have defined them. The English Department's published outcomes for English 2010 are the following:

By the end of English 2010/2100, students should be able to:

- Analyze both academic and other writing situations.
- Write in various genres.
- Adapt their writing effectively to a given rhetorical situation and purpose, taking into account audience needs and expectations, and genre possibilities and constraints.
- Research, conceptualize rhetorically, and make rhetorical decisions within virtual writing environments.
- Make a presentation of a project.
- Analyze various genres to identify different rhetorical elements such as argument, language, context, etc.
- Read for underlying assumptions that support various arguments and positions.
- Adapt the conventions of argument to a variety of genres.
- Write with an awareness of the ethical dimensions of writing.
- Make effective and practical writing decisions that take into account the ways writing circulates in society.
- Adapt their processes to a variety of genres.
- Manage multi-stage, multi-dimensional writing tasks.
- Use the collaborative dimensions of writing to best meet their own writing purposes.
- Work proficiently within the formal conventions of various genres.
- Design and format documents according to conventions.
- Document sources appropriately for a given genre or discourse.
- Alter and adapt the formal conventions of various genres as needed for new writing situations.
- Write with a minimum of surface error.

[Note: Our outcomes correlate to the following College Student Learning Outcomes:

2. Communicate effectively.

4. Think critically.

5. Develop the knowledge and skills to be civically engaged, and/or to work with others in a professional and constructive manner.

We will be reporting the results of our assessment to the College, as well.]

Method: blind, holistic scoring of end-of-the-course portfolios. Two faculty members will read and holistically score each portfolio according to a 6 point scale. In the case of two scores that are more than 2 points apart, a third reader will adjudicate.

Process:

1. Present and refer to course outcomes as part of teaching the writing assignments.
2. Ask students to consider course outcomes as they prepare their preliminary portfolios.
3. Refer to course outcomes in giving students feedback on their draft work and preliminary portfolios.

4. Ask students to refer again to the course outcomes as they revise and select work for their final course portfolios.
5. At the end of the semester, the participants of the assessment project will meet to norm the holistic reading of the portfolios.
6. All participants in the project will read two classroom sets of portfolios for every participating section.
7. All participants in the project will read a portion of the portfolios requiring third readers.
8. We will meet to discuss the overall results of the project and identify areas in the curriculum that may need revision or improvement.
9. Students will be held harmless as to the holistic ratings of their portfolios—the respective instructors will assign grades as usual.

Disclosure Statement

Your section of English 2010 is a part of an assessment project this year. The goal of this assessment is to determine how well the English 2010 curriculum helps students to achieve proficiency in the course outcomes.

The method of the assessment will be a blind holistic reading of all course portfolios. Students will be held harmless in this assessment, which means that, regardless of the score any student's portfolio receives, the student's final grade will remain unaffected.

If you have any questions about this assessment project, you may ask your instructor. You may also contact Lisa Bickmore, course leader for English 2010, at 957-4686 or Lisa.Bickmore@slcc.edu.

English 2010 Portfolio Assessment Rubric for holistic scoring

Traits:

1. The student writer takes a point of view on an issue.
2. The student writer uses and documents sources appropriately for the writing task.
3. The student writer can analyze effectively, using and citing appropriate evidence.
4. The student writer adapts his/her writing to address specific situations.
5. The student writes persuasively

Scoring:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 6 | The student's writing exhibits all of the traits nearly all of the time. |
| 5 | |
| 4 | The student's writing exhibits all of the traits, but not consistently. |
| 3 | |
| 2 | The student's writing exhibits some of the traits. |
| 1 | |

