

English 101: First-year Writing I
Fall 2012
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Writing About Film in Public Spaces

Purpose: To further progress toward our composition course goals of producing insightful, credible, well-researched, and professional text on a collaborative basis within the framework of large, international, knowledge project.

Audience: Wikipedia readers.

Message: Contextually dependent upon the project you choose, but generally you will report information on film in an encyclopedic context.

Format: Within the boundaries set forth by the Wikipedia community generally, and WikiProject Film specifically.

Due Date: TBD.

Assessment: 100 points possible. This is a group assignment, and all members of the group will share the same grade. Assessment will be divided between process (how you work toward contributing to Wikipedia and completing the reflective essay) and product (your reflective essay).

Assignment Steps

1. The first aspect of the project will be identify, review, and assess Wikipedia's goals and policies to determine how our writing can best contribute to the goals of the larger project.
2. The second task will be to decide which film you will write about, and whether you will work with a group or on your own.
3. The third task will be to examine Wikipedia film pages to determine the rhetorical elements of the best pages. How would you determine the best pages? You can look at longer pages, most revised pages, most visited pages, etc., but it is best to survey pages which are well-developed, and identify common elements of style. Once you have a feel for what makes a good Wikipedia film page, then you



can then assess the film page topic of your choosing.¹ You will need to describe what you think can and should be improved.

4. Propose your project to the class in a 5-7 minute brief and informal presentation. Explain to us your topic, what you want to change, and why those changes will both improve that Wikipedia page and further the development of your own writing skills. Stronger presentations will reference both the five pillars of Wikipedia and our course outcomes.
5. Make your changes to the page. Write out the changes in advance on a word processor. Be sure to register with Wikipedia, and log in each time you access the site. Also, send me your login information. Before you save edits, make sure to use the preview function to read through the proposed changes, and explain your changes in the edit summary box.
6. Once you have begun making your contributions to the page, be sure to document on the discussion pages what you are changing and why you think those changes improve the page in terms of Wikipedia's own style. N.B. There is a high probability that what you write will be changed by another person on Wikipedia. Don't get upset.
7. Compose a reflective essay which assesses this writing experience and the development of your writing skills.

Overall, your mission here is rather similar to our first essay, which sought to inform the reader about a topic. Since you are contributing to an encyclopedia project, you will not contribute "original research," or argue a thesis on a topic. Rather, your mission is to attempt to summarize the state of knowledge on the given topic and convey an ethos of expertise on the subject.

Assignment Calendar

Session 1: Monday

Project Overview. Read and review assignment.
Wikipedia Orientation: Review The Five Pillars of Wikipedia at
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Five_pillars.

¹ Some Wikipedia knowledge communities, including film, have organized themselves as WikiProjects to articulate best practices and nominate pages for internal peer review. The film project has created its own style guideline. Thus, if your writing assignment covers a Wikipedia topic which has formally organized itself as a project, you should consult their project page to help you articulate the appropriate headings on pages – though you need not feel compelled to accept the project's views as final. For more about projects, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject>.



Skim through film pages.
Ponder your group or solo status.

Session 2: Wednesday

Before today's class, compose 250 words or more on the following: Write out a description of your understanding of Wikipedia, its goals, its problems, and how you feel contributing to the site will or will not help your writing skills. Upload in to our electronic course management site as assignment 4, stage 1.

In class today, determine whether you are going to work alone on a film page or work with others. (If you work with others, you will all receive the same grade. No groups larger than four, please.)

Also in class today, determine which film page you will work with. Consult WikiProject Film (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Film) for style guidelines (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style_%28film%29) and to see requests or open tasks.

Session 3: Friday

Before today's class, compose 250 words or more on the following: Complete a brief analysis of Wikipedia film pages. Select and examine any 8 film pages. Read them, and identify their common rhetorical elements. What makes for an adequate film page in Wikipedia? What makes for a better film page in Wikipedia? Be sure to consult the WikiProject Film page (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Film). Upload your 250 word observation in to our electronic course management site as assignment 4, stage 2.

In class today, we will chalkboard what we found, and try to reach consensus on which elements we feel a page must have to be considered complete. We will call these "essential elements," and then identify another set of elements which we feel define the best film pages "best practices." We'll consult the WikProject Film Style Guide as we go. I will post the results of our discussion on our electronic course management site. We will also create Wikipedia logins for those who don't have them. I will also post these in the course electronic space so that we can find each other's contributions.

Session 4: Monday

Before today's class, compose 250 words or more on the following tasks. First, identify the film page you are working on. Using your description of the elements of a good film page from the last assignment, what changes do you think your film page needs? Explain your topic, what you want to change in the Wikipedia page, and why those changes will both improve that Wikipedia page and further



the development of your own writing skills. Stronger drafts will reference both the five pillars of Wikipedia and our course outcomes. Be sure to include your Wikipedia login on this text so that I too can find your contributions on Wikipedia. Upload in to our electronic course management site as assignment 4, stage 3.

In class today, give a 5-7 minute brief and informal presentation. Explain your topic to the class, what you want to change in the Wikipedia page in terms of WikiProject Film Style Guidelines and/or our own terms (“essential elements” and “best practices”), and why those changes will both improve that Wikipedia page and further the development of your own writing skills. Stronger presentations will reference both the five pillars of Wikipedia and our course outcomes.

Session 5: Wednesday

Before today’s class, compose 250 words or more on the following: Write out the actual edits you propose to make for your page. Identify the page, and the changes you will make for each sub-heading (and include sub-heads you will add to the page). Include a link to the article page and its discussion page before and after you have made your changes – four links in all. Upload in to our electronic course management site as Assignment 4, stage 4.

In class today, make those edits. We will handle Q & A for problems during class.

Session 6: Friday

Before today’s class, monitor your pages. Refrain from making changes, and/or responding to any reactions in the discussion pages. Instead, compose 250 words or more on the following: Reflect on the changes you have made to the page, and why or why not you feel they have improved the project. Upload in to our electronic course management site as Assignment 4, stage 5.

In class today: discuss changes others have made to your pages, and the appropriate response to those changes. If others have removed your text, you should open a dialog with them as to why they have done this, and then, after considering their responses, revise your text and repost it. If you get no response, then consider whether your text contributes to overall goals of Wikipedia (in reference with the five pillars and/or the WikiProject Film). If you choose to repost, cite those reasons in the discussion pages for your rationale for reposting. After today’s session you are free to make changes you feel are necessary and/or desirable on the basis that they support the overall mission of Wikipedia.

Session 7: Monday

Before today’s class, compose a 750-1000 reflective essay that addresses the following question: Has writing for a Wikipedia project developed your writing



skills? If so, cite to specific evidence from your contributions to Wikipedia. Where possible, interpret how those contributions have helped to develop your writing skills, either defined by you and/or as defined in the course outcomes listed on the syllabus. Be sure to reflect not only on the text, but also on the drafting process, and your interaction with others in the class and on Wikipedia. If you do not feel that writing for Wikipedia has helped you to develop writing skills, then develop those thoughts as well. Look again at the course outcomes as well as your own expectations about what writing skills a course should develop.

In all likelihood, you will have evidence to support the claim that this assignment helped you to develop writing skills as well as evidence to challenge that idea. You need not feel bound to compose a paper which completely supports or challenges this experience and the development of your skills; rather, you should look for a holistic stance. Upload in to our electronic course management site as Assignment 4, stage 6.

In class today: Discuss changes others have made to your page, how you have responded, and how you plan to respond. Also, discuss your draft of the reflective essay. What challenges have you faced in composing it? What do you need to change before the next class session? (Optional: Complete peer review.)

Session 8: Wednesday

Before class today, complete the final draft of your reflective essay. Upload in to our electronic course management site as Assignment 4, stage final.

In class today, continue observation of changes made to pages. Hold open discussion of which pages have had the most development.



Assessment of Writing about Film in Public Spaces

Assessment Rubric

| Writing Stage Description | Points Awarded |
|---|----------------|
| <p><u>Stage 1: 10 points possible</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer offer at least 250 words describing her initial understanding of Wikipedia? <input type="checkbox"/> Is thought given to the goals of Wikipedia, and evidence of having conducted at least some cursory background reading on the site? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer describe his own opinion about approaching this assignment? <input type="checkbox"/> Is there reference to developing writing skills? | |
| <p><u>Stage 2: 10 points possible</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer offer at least 250 words on the common rhetorical elements for 8 film pages? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer identify the elements required for an <u>adequate</u> film page in Wikipedia? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer explain what elements are required for a better film page in Wikipedia? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the writer consult the Wiki Project page for film? | |
| <p><u>Stage 3: 10 points possible</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> In roughly 250 words or more, does the writer identify a plan for changes to a page using his description of the elements of a good film page from the last assignment (session 23)? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer explain why those changes will both improve that Wikipedia page and further the development her own writing skills? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer reference both the five pillars of Wikipedia and our course outcomes? | |
| <p><u>Stage 4: 10 points possible</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer include the actual edits made? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer format those changes according to sub-heading? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer include the four links to the page and talk page before and after changes? | |
| <p><u>Stage 5: 10 points possible</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does the writer offer 250 words or more of reflection on his changes and their potential for improving Wikipedia? | |
| <p><u>Reflective Essay Final: 50 points possible</u></p> | |



Competent: If you meet all of the following standards, then your writing is competent level and earns a score of 35 – 39.

- Essay identifies writing skills of the course, and conveys an understanding of their significance.
- Essay connects portions of Assignment 4 to writing skills, showing skill development (or lack of development) through the composing process of Assignment 4.
- Essay integrates supporting text of the project page into the essay using appropriate MLA formatting.
- Essay conveys an understanding of purpose for the wiki page, as defined through the knowledge community, and evaluates the writer's contribution on those terms.
- Writer's contributions contribute to the value of the project by adding credible facts within existing categories, utilizing Neutral POV.
- Writer's contributions integrate themselves within existing content on page, reflecting an awareness of what comes before and after. Prose reflects a professional and credible ethos.

Skillful: If, in addition to the “competent” standards above, your writing meets all of the standards below, then your writing is at the skillful level and earns a score of 40 – 44.

- Essay persuasively explains the writing skills of the course, provides examples, and conveys an understanding of their significance.
- Essay persuasively displays development (or lack of development) of writing skills by synthesizing the various contributions to the wiki as well as the process documents of sessions 2 – 6.
- Essay coherently integrates supporting text from the wiki page into the essay using appropriate MLA formatting, evidencing a sense of professional standards and audience in both documents.
- Essay conveys an understanding of purpose for the wiki page, as defined through the knowledge community, and evaluates the writer's contribution



on those terms.

- Essay displays and awareness of the epistemology of the wiki knowledge community, and demonstrates successful contribution to that community, perhaps pointing to successful discussions on talk pages.
- Writing reflects an awareness of the knowledge in the field. Writer participates in assessing worth and status of page, perhaps by adding appropriate categories to the page where needed. Contributions are well-researched, and provide credible documentation. Ethos reflects some expertise.

Distinctive: If you meet all of the “skillful” requirements above, and your writing stands out for any of the following reasons, then your writing is on the distinctive level and earns a score of 45 – 50.

- Writing reflects a sense of how knowledge is made and judged within the field
- writing participates in assessing worth of and/or defining its scope of project
- voice earns respect and exhibits trustworthiness for credible research
- contributions help advance page to acknowledgement within Wikipedia
- writer attends to issues which integrate other contributions; community consensus on discussion pages acknowledges worth of writer’s contributions
- writer shows extraordinary inventiveness and/or creativity in contributions.

Under-Developed: If your writing is lacking in any of these following ways, then your contributions are under-developed, and will earn a score of 0 – 34.

- Form of writing undercuts authority of writer and project.
- Essay identifies few outcomes, or conveys a failure to understand them.



| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contributions to wiki are erroneous, off-topic, or raise questions about credibility.<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tone of contributions inappropriate. Writer promotes conflict or exhibits less than professional behavior in discussion pages. | |
| | Total (of 100): _____ |

