

The “interviews” assignment

Goals:

- To introduce students to genres of writing, arguments, argumentations, and the use of rhetoric within various professions
- To introduce students to various methods of professional and academic research (using primary and secondary sources) and writing
- To introduce students to various methods of conducting research
- To introduce students to reflective writing

Objectives:

- Students will learn how to develop questions to ask in an interview
 - Students will learn how to write a professional email
 - Students will conduct a series of 3 semi-interviews and write reflections on each of one of them, as well as one large reflection synthesizing all of them together in APA format
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The assignment description

Writing Assignment = 3 Semi-Interview Reflection Essays and 1 final reflection over all 3 interviews (_____ of your overall grade):

This writing assignment is a series of 3 interviews conducted in 3 different communities: *Academic* or *professional*. Some of the requirements and expectations for this assignment are listed below:

- Locate individuals to interview
- Develop relevant questions to ask an interviewee
- Set up a meeting time either through the email or by the telephone
- Act polite at the interview
- Ask questions slowly
- Allow adequate time for interviewee to respond and to elaborate
- Take notes during each interview
- Be conscious of interviewee’s time
- Thank interviewee for their time and answers
- Write a 600-900 word reflection on interviewee’s responses and any observations you have made
- Send a email thanking the interviewee for their time and help
- Ask the interviewee if they would like to read a copy of the reflection you wrote after the interview

After all 3 reflections are written, synthesize them into 1 large written document, adding any new information or insight you have gleaned through this assignment.

- Please see below for a breakdown of what you need to do:
 - 600-900 words-typed, double-spaced reflective essay of Interview 1 (academic or professional interview in APA format)
 - 600-900 words -typed, double-spaced reflective essay of Interview 2 (academic or professional interview in APA format)
 - 600-900 words -typed, double-spaced reflective essay of Interview 3 (academic or professional interview in APA format)
 - 1,000-1,700 words-typed, double-spaced final essay, synthesizing all 3 interviews into one essay (in APA format)

This assignment will be due on _____ by _____.

Weekly class plans for this assignment

Week 1:

- Start discussing the “interview assignment,” [show past student examples](#) and answer questions.
- Weekly Discussion 1* (in-class discussion): Primary research, interviews, developing questions for interviews, how to “find people,” how to write a formal email, take notes, interviewer etiquette.
- In-class readings: [US higher education: A cultural introduction](#) & [Writing in North American higher education: A primer for international students](#) (and then QUESTION both readings! When should we be consistent with formats and conventions? Using the “I” in your writing? What is “plagiarism?” and many more...)
- Reference Reading:
 1. *The Brief McGraw-Hill Guide*, pp. 861-869 (how to conduct primary research semi-interviews) ALSO pages A-32-A-33 (for how to write an effective email).
 2. [“The interview process” by Mary Beth Elmer](#) (PDF file)

Week 2:

- Short discussion over readings (if there are any questions)
- Activity - Mock interview with a classmate.
- Discussion about developing interview questions (the whole class helps develop questions to ask/not to ask).
- “Do’s & Don’t’s of interviews” – class comes up with a list
- Writing formal emails.
- Locating individuals to interview.
- Reference Reading:
 1. [“Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators” by Daniel W. Turner III](#) (PDF file)
 2. OWL “Interviewing” (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/559/04/>)

Week 3:

- Workshop Day** – Issues/Problems locating individuals and developing questions.
- Short discussion over readings (if there are any questions)
- Weekly Discussion 2* (in-class discussion): What is [reflective writing](#)? How to reflect on your interviews? How to synthesize all 3 interviews into 1 essay.
- In-class readings (handouts): On [rhetoric & argumentation](#) and [APA](#)
- Reference Reading:
 1. [“Conducting in-depth interviews: A guide for designing conducting in-depth interviews for evaluation input” by Carolyn Boyce and Palena Neale](#) (PDF file)

Week 4:

- Workshop Day** – On interviews, finding those people, developing those questions, emailing, writing those reflections, making back-up plans, more stuff; go over rubric for 3 interview reflective essays and final reflection.
- Short discussion over readings (if there are any questions)
- Reference Reading:
 1. [“A method for the analysis of data from online educational research” by Alison Hramiak](#) (PDF file)

Week 5:

- Allow one week for writing out the reflections (drafting) and for tweaking the drafts, as well as for teacher and student feedback

Grading rubric: The “interviews” assignment

Each check mark indicates that you have engaged in the required tasks in order to complete the assignment. A check mark indicates that you receive full credit.

Due on: _____ by _____.

GRADING SCALE

16-14 check marks = 98: A, 13-11 check marks = 89: B, 10-8 check marks = 79: C, 7-5 check marks = 69: D; 4-0 check marks = F.

Name: _____

- You stayed in constant contact with your composition teacher and any team members during the construction of portfolio one and has the necessary documentation to prove it (i.e. emails, plans, phone numbers, class meetings/discussions) _____
- You have arranged a visit(s) to your campus community(ies), have proof of the email that you sent to conduct an interview, as well as the response of the individual(s) _____
- You have developed appropriate questions that you plan to ask individual(s) within various discourse communities, with constructive feedback from any peers, and composition instructor (i.e. in-class conferences or separate conferences with me outside of class) _____
- You have adequately reflected on the answers or responses from the staff, faculty, or individuals from the various discourse communities, as well as proof (i.e. that the those individuals have approved the use of that information within an academic essay or in a presentation on campus) _____
- You have proof of any rough drafts (reflection essays), as well as a final essay, that shows both primary and secondary sources (if any) properly cited _____
 - Reflective interview documents (3 total mini-papers, 600-900 words-typed each):
 - 1 from an academic community _____
 - 1 from a personal/professional community _____
 - 1 from your campus/professional/academic community _____
 - Final document (Synthesizing all 3 interview reflections into one, 1,000-1,700 words-typed):
 - Does the writer describe the various communities/observations/answers in detail?

 - Is your paper relatively free of non-standard academic uses of English? Are deviations of style/usage appropriate and effective? _____
 - Is there a logical flow to your ideas? _____
 - Is each paragraph unified? _____
 - Are there effective transitions between your paragraphs? _____
 - Does the writer exhibit appropriate appeals and an awareness of audience, purpose, and context? _____
 - Does it encourage the reader to read the essay? _____
- You have shown that you have fully reflected on the primary research (i.e. the interviews) _____

Total Grade: _____