

English 145.13: Writing in the Disciplines for Business and Government Majors (Writing the Genres of Social Media)

Fall 2014 Section 1 (Online)

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Wednesdays 11:00am-12:30pm and by appointment

Course Description

The primary goal of English 145.13 is to prepare students for writing and researching in business and professional environments. In Illinois State University's Writing Program, we believe that the best way to accomplish that goal is through a **genre studies and cultural-historical activity approach** (CHAT). Although those terms might not mean much to you yet, they refer to the idea that teaching students how to adapt to new writing situations (by learning how to understand, analyze, critique, and produce the typified, recurring responses (genres) in their rhetorical, historical, social, cultural contexts) is the best way to prepare students to adapt to new writing situations in the future.

To put it another way, teaching isolated writing skills, such as decontextualized grammar drills, does not often transfer effectively to new situations. Thus, rather than teach individual writing skills or even the genre conventions of a limited academic genre that you may or may not run into again in the future, the Writing Program believes in writing instruction that helps students recognize genre conventions and the rhetorical effects of those conventions, in order to gain a conscious understanding of their own writing practices. Students will grow not only as writers, but also as researchers of their own and others' writing practices.

Learning Outcomes

In order to support the genre and CHAT-focused approach as described above, we will focus on the following specific learning outcomes over the course of the semester. We will discuss their meaning in more depth when they come up in each unit.

Identifying Genres

- Students should be able to identify, articulate, and produce genres relevant to professional and business environments.
- Students should be able to identify conventions that are commonly associated with specific genres and be able to produce genres based on those identifications.
- Students should be able to communicate in written, spoken and/or visual genres.
- Students should be able to recognize differences in genres for different purposes, such as between genres for academic purposes and genres for business purposes, and demonstrate an initial understanding of why those differences exist.

Flexible Research Skills

- Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of what constitutes research related to professional and business genres.
- Students should gain familiarity with data collection methods, such as print materials, digital databases, archival resources, observations, interviews, surveys, and/or case studies.

- Students should be able to use library databases, scholarly journals, and trade journals used most frequently for genres related to professional and business purposes.
- Students should know what constitutes valid, reliable and appropriate source material for genres related to professional and business purposes.
- Students should understand the role that research plays in writing and communicating within business and professional contexts.
- Students should expect to research and produce genres in group/team environments.

Using Citation Formats and Citing Source Materials

- Students should have a general understanding of the different types of citation styles used in academic disciplines (MLA, APA, Chicago Manual of Style, etc.), and how those citation styles may or may not transfer over directly to business and professional writing.
- Students should be able to integrate source material into written genres in ways appropriate to that genre and citation style.
- Students should also know how to cite (or give credit to) sources in oral, visual and multi-modal genres.
- Students should recognize that there are alternative means of citing (or giving credit to) sources in different business and professional genres.

Discourse Communities

- Students should demonstrate an understanding of how written, oral and visual communication is shaped by discourse communities within genres relevant to professional and business settings.
- Students are encouraged to research, subscribe to, contribute to, and/or be active participants in one or more discourse communities already established within their field, such as professional associations, business fraternities, twitter streams, professional/trade magazines, or annual conferences or conventions.
- Students should understand that different discourse communities differently shape the manner in which genres are produced.

Trajectory

- Students should have a general understanding of trajectory as it pertains to genre production and reception. Trajectory refers to the way that a text moves as a result of influences upon it, such as authors, audiences, cultures, societies, time periods, technologies, distribution methods, production methods and mediums, research, and more.
- Students should understand that the trajectory of any text or genre is not simple, unidirectional, or existing in a vacuum; instead, the trajectory of a given text is complex, multi-directional, and non-linear.
- Students should understand that the forces acting on a text are influenced by genre conventions, cultures, societies, technologies and histories.
- Students should understand that the trajectory of a text does not always end once it has reached its desired/designated receiver.
- Students should recognize that all primary, secondary, tertiary and unintended audiences, of a text or genre, take-up or receive texts differently.
- Students should understand that audience is an important factor in determining the trajectory of a text. Audiences determine the manner in which a text is constructed thus the language, format, style and etc. should be adjusted/adapted to meet the differing needs of their audiences.

Globalization, Cultural Contexts and Diversity

- Students should be able to recognize how international, multicultural, and culturally diverse settings impact and shape the ways that different genres are composed and received by readers/users.
- Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of how to produce genres in ways that take international, multicultural, and culturally diverse settings, practices, and ideologies into consideration.
- Students should recognize the ways in which international, multicultural, and culturally diverse settings impact their respective discourse communities.
- Students should recognize that the genres that they produce reflect the cultural, social, and temporal environments in which they are produced, and thus may be received differently across international, multicultural, and culturally diverse settings.

Ethics

- Students should be familiar with codes of conduct, ethical behaviors and practices, and guidelines for responsible research within their professional fields.
- Students should adhere to established ethical guidelines within their respective discourse communities.
- Students should recognize that while ethical behavior is interpreted differently within different cultural, social, and global contexts, they are still expected to adhere to established ethical behaviors and practices.

Course Materials

- You do not need to buy any textbooks for this course. Instead, you will download readings from ReggieNet. You can print them or read them online.
- This is a technologically intensive course, so at almost all times during the semester, you will need access to a computer and the Internet (you can always use campus labs). See more details on technology below.

****The policies that follow in this syllabus are intended to function as a contract. By staying in this course, you are signaling that you understand and agree to the policies contained therein.***

Technology

We will use **ReggieNet**, ISU's current course management system, for this course; all course materials, including assignments and supplementary readings, will be uploaded there and you will upload homework and essays there. Please let me know immediately if you are new to ReggieNet and need any assistance.

Because this is an online-only course, it is vital that you have **access to the internet** at all times. If you are located near ISU's campus, you have access to the many campus labs, such as at Milner Library, so computer and Internet access should never be an issue. If you are not located near ISU, you will need a back-up plan for when your personal computer or home Internet may fail. It is inevitable that you will have technological issues multiple times over the course of a semester, so plan accordingly. If your personal computer breaks down, have your files backed up somewhere else and some other way to access ReggieNet so that you can meet course deadlines. If this will not be

possible, I encourage you to change into a face-to-face section of this course, because technological issues will never excuse you from the work that is due for this course.

Please also note that it is even more important that you be a self-guided, responsible student in an online course. Because there is group work in this course, you not only compromise your own success, but also others, if you fail to meet deadlines. Therefore, it is your responsibility to **check your ilstu.edu email AND our course ReggieNet at least every other day**. I will email you announcements, reminders, and changes (often from ReggieNet), but ultimately, it is your responsibility to check for due dates and assignments. If you are unable to do so, I recommend that you change into a face-to-face section of this course. This online section will by no means be easier than other sections. Rather, it will allow us to explore the possibilities of learning about writing for business environments using the benefits of various writing technologies. The opportunities afforded to us by meeting online, versus on campus, offer us some flexibility, but you will still have rigorous assignments and group work that is common in this course (see Assignments below for group work details).

Because we will be exchanging all of our work online, please be conscientious about **file type and file names**. To begin, I use a PC and need files in Word or rich text file formats (**.doc, .docx, or .rtf**). I cannot open files in .pages (a Mac document) or .wps (Microsoft Works file), for example. However, please note that ISU now offers a FREE version of Microsoft Office 365, so all students have access to Word (go to <http://at.illinoisstate.edu/office365>).

Please also save your files using names that will help me understand what it is, such as using your **last name and the project name** (McDuffieProject2.docx). Because technological problems happen early and often but will not excuse you from work that is due, be sure to save your work often and in multiple places (personal computer, email it to yourself, upload to google docs or dropbox, save on USB/flash/jump drive, etc.).

In addition, although ReggieNet works fine the majority of the time, I have heard reports of technical issues, such as it timing out when writing a discussion post, freezing during a quiz, or not allowing a file upload. Even though these should be rare, I recommend submitting your work several hours ahead of the deadline in case you need to troubleshoot. To begin, try different browsers when you have trouble (I recommend Internet Explorer and ISU's Center for Teaching and Learning recommends Firefox). For long pieces of writing, I recommend composing your work elsewhere and then copying and pasting it to ReggieNet using the "Paste from Word" button (do not simply copy and paste or you will have substantial html errors). You can also reach out to me and ISU's tech support for help (<https://helpdesk.illinoisstate.edu/>). There is also a ReggieNet YouTube Channel that has tutorial videos (search in YouTube for ReggieNet and look for Videos for Students).

Participation

Participation looks different in an online environment than a face-to-face environment, but it is nonetheless extremely important in order for this course to function as a communal learning environment. All members of the class should expect to be active participants in all aspects of the class (assignments, discussion boards, group work, etc.). Active participation means being timely with responses and assignments as well as being respectful and kind in all interactions with

instructors and students. Disrespect in any form will not be tolerated so please approach me with any issues that arise as soon as possible.

Instructor Access

Although this is an online course, I am still a real live person on campus. My office is located in Stevenson 201A and I welcome you all to come by and introduce yourselves during office hours or by appointment. I also will log into ReggieNet's chat feature and to Google's chat feature during office hours in order to be available that way. I look forward to getting to know all of you as much as possible!

Regarding response time: Please allow 24 hours for me to respond to emails and discussion posts. I will probably respond sooner if it is during business hours, but please note that I live a family friendly lifestyle that does not allow for immediate responses during evenings or weekends.

Assignments and Grades

The grading scale for the course is:

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below 60 = F

Course grades are comprised of:*

Unit 1 - Genre and CHAT	
Introduction and Analysis	40%
Unit 2 - Genre Application	25%
Unit 2 - Genre Production	25%
<u>Final Reflection</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total	100%

**Please note that these are subject to change depending on the pace and needs of the course.*

There are three primary units to this course that support the genre studies and cultural-historical activity (CHAT) approach to learning about writing. The first unit is about learning about genre studies and CHAT and applying that knowledge to social media through a genre analysis. The second unit is about deepening that knowledge by researching and analyzing a specific company's use of social media. The third unit is about utilizing that knowledge by producing a mock-up of a company's social media site using the knowledge you gained throughout the semester. The percentages included in each unit are comprised of daily assignments, participation, one main group project, and a reflection. Assignment sheets will be provided for all major assignments. Each student must complete all parts of all units in order to pass the class.

The major projects within all of the units are **group projects**. Most courses within the Writing Program incorporate group work given the way it facilitates communal knowledge building, greater depth within the projects, and real-life work situations, so we will continue to take advantage of those possibilities even within an online course. There are so many tools that facilitate group work – Facebook groups, Google Docs, GroupMe, ReggieNet tools (discussion forums, Chat), Google Chat, Skype, FaceTime – so you can do all of this work electronically if you are unable to meet in person (although most groups do report more success meeting in person). If you are uncomfortable with these requirements, please change to another section or take this course another time.

In the Writing Program at ISU, we support our program philosophies by making our assessments focused on student *learning* as much as possible, rather than more traditional models of assessing writing based on the final *product*. Thus, even though we do have three main projects in the course, the minor assignments that you complete along the way that demonstrate *how* you are learning about

writing will compromise approximately half of the unit grades. I will give you more detailed grade break downs as I assign the activities, as well as how feedback and grades will be distributed (through the Assignments tab and Gradebook on ReggieNet, for example). This focus on learning might feel uncomfortable because it is different from what you have come to expect from English classes, so please ask me questions about this as we go if you feel confused.

Late work

The learning in this course requires in-depth reading, reflection, writing, discussion, and significant group work. In order to meet all of the goals of those activities, everyone must complete all of the work for this class according to the given deadlines. According, late work will not be accepted. In cases of emergency, please contact me ASAP so that alternate arrangements can be made. Work is often not turned in because people are having trouble with the assignments before the due date, so please contact me in advance with any issues so that I can assist you.

Plagiarism

Overt plagiarism is thankfully rare (such as submitting work for this course that was prepared for another course or by someone else), although all cases of plagiarism are indeed serious and must be reported to ISU's Office of Community Rights and Responsibilities. What is more common is unintentional plagiarism, the kind that arises when one fails to sufficiently attribute the use of someone else's ideas or quotations. Please properly cite all of your sources in order to avoid any associations with plagiarism. We will discuss citation styles, and let me know if you need any assistance beyond what we discuss in class.

Special Needs and Accommodations

I am committed to making this classroom accessible to all needs and learning styles. Students who desire consideration because of any disability or situation should come see me as soon as possible. Any student needing to arrange an accommodation for a documented disability should also contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 309-438-5853 (voice) or 309-438-8620 (TTY) as soon as possible.

Julia N. Visor Academic Center

Free outside writing assistance can be found at the Visor center, which offers consulting in almost all subjects. The Visor Center also offers study skills workshops. Call 309-438-7100 for an appointment or visit <http://ucollege.illinoisstate.edu/about/visor/> for more information.

Student Counseling Services

College students sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience anxiety or depression and struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. SCS is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at Counseling.IllinoisState.edu or by calling (309) 438-3655.

Schedule

This is a general schedule to give you an overview of the class. It is subject to change so please see the details under the Unit tabs on ReggieNet for the links to the specific assignments.

Week 1 Introduction to the course and Genre Studies

Aug 18 Read syllabus & take syllabus quiz
Introduction Discussion Post
Read A Guide to Genre and Writing Research by Rob Rowan
Read Eating Genre for Breakfast: The Cereal Box Experience by Michael Soares

Reading Response Discussion Post

Week 2 Genre Studies and Introduction to Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)

Aug 25 Read short excerpt from Genre by Bawarshi & Reiff
Read Cracking the Genre of the Resume by Kayla Bruce
Write discussion post performing initial research on a genre
Read Understanding Language and Culture with Cultural Historical Activity Theory by Tyler Kostecki
Read CHATting in the Workplace by M. Irene Taylor & Jeff Rients
Take CHAT quiz
**Aug 29 - Last day to drop a class without any grade and a full reduction of charges*

Week 3 Introduction to Social Media

Sept 1 No class - Labor Day
Read Clive Thompson on the New Literacy by Clive Thompson
Read Social Media's Six Genres by Tom Z
Read CHAT: Four of One Hundred and Forty Characters by Abbie O'Ryan
Complete CHAT map of a piece of social media

Week 4 Introduction to Genre Analysis

Sept 8 Introduce group Genre Analysis assignment and make groups
Skim this history of internet use / social media use
Read 10 Best Social Media Sites for Small Business Owners
Read Which social network is best for your business?
Read Sass in 140 Characters: Learning to Communicate on the Social Network by Marc Vanderjack
Submit Week 4 Quiz
Submit group check-in report

Week 5 Explore Businesses' Use of Social Media

Sept 15 Read Top 10 Influential Social Media Marketing Campaigns of 2013

Read How Oreo Won the Marketing Super Bowl With a Timely Blackout Ad on Twitter

Read Worst Social Media Blunders of 2013

Read JPMorgan's Twitter Mistake

Read #McDStories: When A Hashtag Becomes A Bashtag

Read Tweet That, Like This, Check-In Here by Maddy Marchini

Submit discussion post

Submit group check-in report

Week 6 Genre Analysis Continued

Sept 22

Workshop Genre Analysis

Read about editing and proofreading

Genre Analysis Due

Work on Reflections

Optional: Read BP Lawyers Use Old-School Trick

Week 7 Writing, Editing, and Grammar

Sept 29

Reflections Due

Read Finding Common Errors

Read The 11 Most Common Grammatical Mistakes And How To Avoid Them

Skim 100 Most Misspelled Words

For reference: 20 most common errors

Take Grammar Quiz

Read Carroll - On Writing Well

Discussion Board post on writing principles

Week 8 Genre Application

Oct 6

Introduce Genre Application

Read Grammatical Snobbery by Autumn Jackson

Read The Importance of Understanding Genre . . . and Memos by Jessica Safran

Submit group check-in report

**Oct 10 is last day to drop a course*

Week 9 Research

Oct 13

Read "Conducting Research" by van Rys, Meyer, and Sebranek

Take research quiz

Submit group check-in report

**Note I will be traveling Oct. 15-18 and will have limited access to email*

Week 10 Genre Application

Oct 20

Workshop Genre Applications

Genre Applications Due
Work on Reflections

Week 11 Global and Cultural Implications of Genres

Oct 27 Reflections Due
Read From Religion to Chicken Cannibalism: American Fast Food Ads in Kuwait by Summer Qabazard
Read From Contributors to Costs: The Cultural Implications of Obituaries by Kristi McDuffie
Read Justine Sacco's Aftermath: The Cost of Twitter Outrage by Roxane Gay

Read The Internet's destructive gender gap: Why the Web can't abandon its misogyny
Optional: Read Pinterest's Gender Trouble
Optional: Read Microsoft's CEO Blunder about Women's Pay Raises
Complete discussion board post

Week 12 Genre Productions

Nov 3 Introduce Project 3 (Genre Productions)
Read Understanding Trajectory by Jordana Hall
Post social media site preferences
Complete group check-in report

Week 13 Discourse Communities

Nov 10 Work on Genre Productions
Read Issue Brief: Discourse Communities by Charles Bazerman
Read Ethics and the Workplace Writer Chapter by Dobrin, Keller & Weisser

Research the ethics code and discourse conventions of a professional organization in your field
Complete discussion post reporting your research findings on discourse communities and ethics
Complete group check-in report

Week 14 Genre Productions Continued

Nov 17 Workshop Genre Productions
Revise Genre Productions
Genre Productions Due Nov. 23

Nov 24 No class - Thanksgiving break

Week 15 Individual Social Media Profiles and Course Reflections

Dec 1 Read Managing Social Media Profiles Handout

Read Managing Your Online Identity by Reufman
Read How Recruiters Use Social Networks by Schawbel
Read Will Your Facebook Profile Sabotage Your Job Search by White
Complete discussion forum post on investigating your social media profiles
Complete Final Course Reflection
Complete Course Feedback and Department Evaluations

**Finals
Week**

No class - have a nice break!

Genre Analysis

Now that you have learned some foundational details about genre analysis and cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), it is time to put that information to use. The **purpose** of this assignment is to analyze one social media platform (that is often used in business) using the information you learned about genre studies and CHAT so far in this class. Each group will choose on specific platform to analyze (and note, it may need to be a particular tool within a platform if the platform itself is quite large), in order to describe the features, conventions, and contexts surrounding that platform's use. The goal of the analysis is to help a future user navigate that new writing situation with ease.

In order to help you develop real-life problem solving skills, as well as make this assignment more interesting, this is the **case study** we will use:

Each group is a unit of Redbird Consulting, and you have been hired by Lucy Lancaster, Owner and CEO of Lancaster Landings, Inc. Lancaster Landings is a small company started two years ago to make organic health food distributed directly to local fitness centers. Lucy now wants to expand her social media presence beyond her personal Facebook page, as she has heard of other companies using LinkedIn, Foursquare, Yelp, Pinterest, and more, so she is hiring Redbird Consulting to determine which social media platform might best fit her needs. Each group will research and analyze a different site and report its findings to Lucy.

This means that the **audience** for the document is our fictional client, Lucy. Before the findings are submitted to Lucy, she will have a chance to review them and ask questions (hint: this is peer review – we will all embody Lucy and ask each other questions in order to provide revision feedback.)

In order to approach this genre analysis, find **three (3) business sites** on your social media site as examples to study (see how we will choose sites and groups below). Search for the genre conventions that are repeated on all sites – and those that are not – and contextualize that analysis with CHAT analysis (more details on that are also below).

Choosing groups:

Each person will vote on their preferences for which site to analyze and I will make the groups based on those preferences. (I am willing to take private requests to work with certain people, but note that some of my worst work groups have been people who have known each other.) We will have 5 groups of 3-4 people, and here are the five sites that I prefer to study based on numerous articles on best social media sites for businesses: **LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, and Foursquare**. Note you need to find companies' uses of these sites, as our purpose are business social media use, not individuals! I am not letting us research Facebook because it is far too familiar and over-studied (although it is the largest). Other sites that I will consider are: **Yelp, Twitter, and Google+**. Please email me asap if you want to make a suggestion.

Details of the assignment:

Due Dates: Mon, Sept 22: Complete draft for Lucy's feedback (workshop)

Sat, Sept 27: Final draft

Points: Weekly group check-ins (submitted as a group) (5 points each);
Complete draft submitted on-time (submitted as a group) (10 points);
Peer review (submitted individually) (10 points);
Final version (submitted as a group) (100 points);
Reflection (submitted individually) (20 points)

Length: At least 1,500 words

Format: Each group should submit this information to Lucy in the **genre of a report**. Although there is latitude about what a report looks like, and investigating the genre of a report is part of this assignment, here are some things that are required:

- A title
- All consultant's names
- An executive summary at the beginning of the report giving an overview of the entire report
- Use headings throughout the report
- Single-spaced (standard in business) text
- 12-point font
- Include page numbers
- Submit the file with an indicative name, such as PinterestGenreAnalysis.docx, as a .rtf, .doc, or .docx file type

Include the following in your analysis:

- Clearly state the **purpose** of your analysis (do NOT assume that someone picking up your document has an assignment sheet!). The remainder of your report will include the details that support the results of your investigation. Use appropriate headings, background information, details, visuals, and citations as appropriate.
- Since this is not an academic essay, you do not need to use MLA or APA-type citation styles, but you do still need to **credit work** that you obtained elsewhere. You may do this through footnotes or endnotes or in-text citations. A reader should be able to find the original source easily, so include information such as author, name of the source, date, where it is published, and URL, if applicable.
- An explanation of the **generic conventions** included in business's use of this social media site (not individual use or general use!) as evidenced by your chosen examples. Conventions include but are not limited to:
 - purpose of the site and how to identify the purpose,
 - target audience of the site (users) and how to identify the target audience,
 - what kind of information is presented on the site and how (via links, images, posts, text boxes, etc.)
 - how it is presented (visual layout, language used, formality of language, how often),

- how the site is accessed,
- how the site is created and who creates it,
- how the company uses the site on a recurring basis, and
- many other things that you will notice as you look through the sites, research the sites, and compare different companies' uses of the site.
- Also consider what parts of the site seem to vary depend on the company, versus what parts of the site are required per the social media site. For example, some advertisements may be required, while some "Contact Us" information might be individualized.

Be detailed and give **examples** from the company sites that you see.

- Research into the cultural, historical, activity components (**CHAT**) of the genre. You might, for example, provide a bit of history on the site, describe the demographics of the users, the social contexts of its uses, the cultural norms of the creators and/or users, the technological interfaces that impact how people use the site, how technology has changed how people use the site, and so forth. Do not list out the terms within CHAT, but rather, integrate them organically within the report. (Note: you do not have to cover ALL aspects of CHAT, but you must address some.) Note that it could be interesting to use the Wayback Machine <http://archive.org/web/> to see how a company's use of a site has changed over time.
- In addition to these suggestions, use the **readings** and **handouts** from the course so far to assist in your analysis. Notice how some people focus on different aspects of genre and CHAT depending on what they are researching. While you must meet the minimum requirements of the assignment, you have some latitude to determine what seems most important to relay to Lucy about your social media genre to convey in your analysis.
- Connect your findings to implications for **composing** in the genre, since that is the purpose of this class. That is, make some recommendations to Lucy about what she should think about should she create her company's social media site in the platform you are investigating. Also, do you think your social media site would best fit her company's needs? Why or why not? This way, you are thinking about how your client can use your analysis!
- Pay attention to your **writing**. This is a professional document, so it should be clearly organized, contain strong paragraph unity (each paragraph should have one central purpose), use transitions as necessary, and contain few mechanical or spelling errors. Regardless of whether group members split up the writing of sections, each group member is responsible for **revising, editing, and proofreading** each other's sections! All members should take responsibility and pride in the entire report.

Evaluation: This analysis will be evaluated based on adhering to the above requirements, so make sure that you read directions carefully, include all required items, and aspire to compose a detailed, sophisticated analysis. Your ultimate grade will also depend on the extent that you incorporate feedback from the workshop, so be sure to integrate instructor and peer feedback into your final draft!

Assignment details for the Reflection:

In this reflection, tell me about the process that you went through to conduct this genre analysis. Our genre studies and CHAT model teaches how to adapt to new writing situations, rather than producing a perfect document, so this kind of reflection is necessary to help you remember what skills you are learning (and also to show me that you are indeed doing these activities and learning!). Therefore, this document is vital and required to receive credit for this unit! Furthermore, this part of the assignment is individual. Each group member must complete it independently (no credit will be given if it looks like you composed the document together) in order to demonstrate that each of you is learning and participated in the group activities.

In at least 400 words, speak to the following items in your Reflection:

Describe your **research processes**. How did you research the genre conventions? How did you research the CHAT conventions? How did you decide what aspects of genre and CHAT to focus on? Include specific sources (URLs) if necessary. Be detailed – “I Googled it” is NOT a sufficient answer. What search terms did you use and why? What kinds of sources did it lead you to? In addition to describing how you researched the social media site, also describe how you and your group members researched the report (the genre that you submitted your analysis in).

Describe your **composing process**. How did you use what you learned in your research to compose the report? How did your group members work together to produce the document as a group? How did you revise, edit, and proofread your report?

Finally, **reflect** on those processes. What made this genre enjoyable or challenging for you to work with? What would you do differently next time? How can you connect this work to writing or communication you will do in the future, whether it is in classes, workplaces, or your personal life? What else did you learn that I have not yet asked about? Please feel free to add any comments about the unit you have not yet made.

Genre Application

The next part of learning about adapting to new writing situations is applying knowledge of genres through critical analysis of other people's writing. So, we are going to take what you have learned analyzing a genre (your social media platforms) and use it to see how well a different company has produced writing in that genre. (And, of course, you are going to be practicing writing by writing this project!!!) Specifically, you are going to choose a company you have not yet looked at yet – maybe a company you might want to work for someday, a client you could imagine having someday, or a company you have worked for in the past – and analyze its page on your social media platform.

The **purpose** of this project is thus to apply what you have learned about genre and CHAT (through social media for business purposes) to someone else's (a company's) writing. The **audience** for the project is the CEO of that company (you will probably have to look up who that is).

Due Dates: Mon, Oct. 20: Complete draft for peer feedback

Sat, Oct. 25: Final draft

Points: Weekly group check-ins (submitted as a group) (5 points each);
Complete draft submitted on-time (submitted as a group) (10 points);
Peer review (submitted individually) (10 points);
Final version (submitted as a group) (100 points);
Reflection (submitted individually) (20 points)

Length: At least 1,000 words

Format: Each group should submit this information to the CEO in the genre of a **memo**. Although there is a little bit of latitude about what a memo looks like, investigating the genre of a memo is part of this assignment (note that it is easy to start with a Microsoft Word template). Here are some things that need to be included:

- Title it as a memo but give a descriptive subject line
- Address it to the CEO of your company and include the company name
- Include the date
- Include the name of our consulting company and all consultant's names
- You may include headings if you find it beneficial
- Single-space the text
- Use 12-point font (preferably serif font – sans serif font is better for headings)
- Include page numbers
- Submit the file with an indicative name, such as ToysRUsMemo.docx, as a .rtf, .doc, or .docx file type

Include the following in your analysis:

- Clearly state the **purpose** of your analysis (do NOT assume that someone picking up your document has an assignment sheet!). The remainder of your memo will include the

details that support the results of your investigation. Use appropriate headings, background information, details, visuals, and citations as appropriate.

- Since this is not an academic essay, you do not need to use MLA or APA-type citation styles, but you do still need to **credit work** that you obtained elsewhere. You may do this through footnotes or endnotes or in-text citations. A reader should be able to find the original source easily, so include information such as author, name of the source, date, where it is published, and URL, if applicable.
- You will need to do some **research** on your company in order to do this project. In addition to attending to the learning outcomes related to conducting research in this course, it is also simply true that consultants need to research a company before opining on their business practices. How would you comment upon how well a company uses social media if you do not even know what it does, what its goals are, what its audience is, and so forth? Thus, some portion of your memo will demonstrate that you have researched the company, including its history and business practices (products, services, target audience), before you describe its social media practices.
- Next, you should describe the company's **social media practices** (on your platform – you do not have to research all platforms!). What does the company typically do on the platform? For example, how often does it post? To what end? What does it try to get people to do?
- Then, **analyze** those social media practices in light of the genre and CHAT analysis of your platform that you conducted in the last project. (Note: it is perfectly acceptable to use your analysis – I give you permission to copy and paste from that project as long as you integrate it well!). Does the company use all of the required genre conventions that you analyzed? More importantly, does it use them effectively? If it does not, is that a wise decision? What aspects of CHAT does it appear to engage in the most overtly on that site? Does it do that well or is it ineffective? Like before, use visual examples so that readers can thoroughly understand your analysis.
- Based on the above analysis, make some **recommendations** to the CEO about how it can improve its social media use on your site. This is how you are connecting your analysis to writing and perhaps the most important point of this project: How can the CEO compose more effectively on this site???
- As before, pay attention to **your own writing**. This is a professional document, so it should be clearly organized, contain strong paragraph unity (each paragraph should have one central purpose), transitions between sections, paragraphs, and sentences, and contain few mechanical or spelling errors. Regardless of whether group members split up the writing of sections, each group member is responsible for **revising, editing, and proofreading** each other's sections! All members should take responsibility and pride in the entire memo.

Evaluation: This analysis will be evaluated based on adhering to the above requirements, so make sure that you read directions carefully, include all required items, and aspire to compose a detailed, sophisticated analysis. Your ultimate grade will also depend on the extent that you incorporate feedback from the workshop, so be sure to integrate peer and instructor feedback into your final draft!

Assignment details for the Reflection:

In this reflection, tell me about the process that you went through to conduct this genre application analysis. Our genre studies and CHAT model teaches how to adapt to new writing situations, rather than producing a perfect document, so this kind of reflection is necessary to help you remember what skills you are learning (and also to show me that you are indeed doing these activities and learning!). Therefore, this document is vital and required to receive credit for this unit! Furthermore, this part of the assignment is individual. Each group member must complete it independently (no credit will be given if it looks like you composed the document together) in order to demonstrate that each of you is learning and participated in the group activities.

In at least **400 words**, speak to the following items in your Reflection:

Describe your **research, analysis, and composing processes**. How did you conduct research for this project? How did you apply what you had learned in the prior project (and in the class overall) about genre and CHAT to help you conduct the analysis in this project? How did you and your group members compose, revise, and edit your memo? BE DETAILED, and tell me *why* you did what you did, not just *what* you did. Why did you make the research decisions that you made? What group composing processes worked well and what didn't and why?

Now, even more so than in the last Reflection, **reflect** on your **learning**. What did you learn about writing through this unit? What skills and techniques have you done that you can use for other writing situations, in other classes, and in future workplace situations (and even in personal writing situations)? Note that your above answers, as well as the learning outcomes listed below, can help you answer this!!!

With any remaining space, I would like to hear about what you found useful, beneficial, challenging, and/or limiting about this project. Do you have any suggestions for me to revise this assignment next semester?

Genre Production

The third and final project involves producing the genres that we have been studying. Because social media sites are public, I will not ask you to create a real social media site; rather, we will create “**mock-ups**,” which are essentially plans or designs for the page. (Note: if you google mock-ups, or mock-up examples, and look at the image results especially, you can find a ton of examples.) Use all of the resources at your disposal to do this (software programs, tools, draw by hand, pull images and video off the web, make images and video yourself!).

We will be using the first and second projects to assist in the genre productions. The catch of this project, however, is that each group will be creating a mock-up for a **new social media site** that it has not yet studied. For example, a group who has been analyzing Foursquare might request to create a LinkedIn profile account for its case study. The purpose of changing sites is to 1) increase genre and CHAT knowledge by reading and applying another group’s research, 2) increase your repertoire of business writing practices for new media by learning about another site, and 3) make the class more interesting by giving you a new site to work on.

In order to continue developing real-life problem solving skills, we will return to the **case study** from Project 1, where Redbird Consulting is hired by Lucy Lancaster, Owner and CEO of Lancaster Landings, Inc. (This will allow you to take advantage of the research you did in Project 1.) Lancaster Landings is a small company started two years ago to make organic health food distributed directly to local fitness centers. Based on the various analyses she previously received from Redbird Consultants, she is ready to move forward in creating her social media site(s). You have been hired to create her page, and this mock-up is the first step in that process. *This time, I will also allow you to create your own case study if you prefer to work on a company in a different market. Please email me in advance for permission.*

The **purpose** of this project is therefore to apply what you have learned about genre and CHAT (through social media for business purposes) by producing the genre that you have been studying. The **audience** for the project is our fictional client, Lucy. Before the findings are submitted to Lucy, she will have a chance to review them and ask questions (hint: this is workshop).

Choosing sites: Each group should upload its site preference (LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, and Foursquare) by end of day **Wednesday, Nov. 5** and I will approve the group preferences asap. I think it will work just fine for more than one group to take on the same social media site, especially because some sites are going to be more difficult than others for this project. I suggest that you get on the sites themselves before voting and think about the kind of work you want to do when deciding. For example, I imagine that a LinkedIn account would involve creating job postings, while a YouTube account would involve storyboarding or actually creating videos, and Instagram would involve creating photos. Of course you can model the piece of this project off of existing pages and take things from the Internet without worrying about copyright since we will not be putting them online, but I still encourage you to think through these things when voting for a site.

Due Dates: Mon, Nov. 17: Complete draft for peer feedback

Sat, Nov. 22: Final draft

Points: Weekly group check-ins (submitted as a group) (5 points each);
Complete draft submitted on-time (submitted as a group) (10 points);
Peer review (submitted individually) (10 points);
Final version (submitted as a group) (100 points);
**Rather than submit a reflection with this assignment, you will submit a final reflection for the course during the last week of the semester.*

Length: Because this mock-up will have multimodal parts, I am not going to mandate a word count minimum. Since it is worth 100 points like the other projects, use the 1,000 word count minimum from the other projects to help you assess the amount of work you should be doing for this project. In addition, there will be writing involved, as you will need to explain the mock-up to your client, so that can help guide you.

Format: The format of this project is going to take some creativity. You should present the mock-up of your social media site however you feel you can best design it. You can submit multiple documents in multiple formats. For example, you may have a main outline (drawn up) of a Pinterest page, with different images and descriptions of different pins. Explain the items as much as you need to, on the same page or on separate pages. You can also have a write-up with the images/designs in an Appendix. As I said, you can be creative in how you organize and present the materials! I am here to help, so ask me questions anytime. Here are some minimal items you should include:

- A cover letter, single-spaced, addressed to the client, including the date, and signed by all group members, that provides an overview of your work. This should contain the purpose and review all of the elements in the mock-up.
- You may find it useful to use a table of contents, if it is particularly large.
- Include at least a mock-up of the main webpage of your social media site.
- Clearly label all of the parts
- Describe, explain, and justify the items in your mock-up as necessary. For example, you may need to label an item “Pin 3” and write an explanation for “Pin 3” explain its purpose and what you are trying to accomplish with it on the page. Use the prior projects to help!
- Use descriptive titles for your files (LancasterInstagramMain.pdf; LancasterInstagramImage1.jpg)

Evaluation: This project will be evaluated based on the following:

- Including the items listed above, including the cover letter with the overview
- Incorporating the aspects of the genre and CHAT analyses into your mock-ups
- Sufficiently explaining the items included in your analysis
- Including enough items in your mock-up to make this a substantial project
- Editing and proofreading all of your items and including citations as necessary