

Essay #5: Entering the Conversation

The Assignment: For this final project of the semester, you will synthesize the information you found in Essay #3 about your field as a discourse community, and the experience you had in Essay #4 about attempting to write as a contributing member of your field, and create a final project (not necessarily an essay) that allows you to enter into the “conversation” of your field, and demonstrates your ability to be an active member of that community.

Rough Draft Due: 11/19

Final Draft Due: 12/3

Limitations of the Project: This is the most flexible project this semester. Since everyone’s field is different in this class, I expect that you will interpret this project in a variety of ways. First, think about how your field communicates: is it through a traditional research essay? If so, then use that format for your project. If not, then use that alternative form of communication (canvas, script, unit plan and rationale, photography, video, website) as the medium for your project.

The Topic: Use your research you did for Essay #3 to inform your work here. This time, instead of doing an overview of what other people say (and how they say it), write as a member of the community. Refer to your research and write in the style adopted by your field’s discourse community.

Audience and Context: Plan to write this “text” with an audience of field members in mind—contributing members of the discourse community, like you. What kinds of things are already assumed by the community that can be quickly skimmed over? What things need to be talked about in detail? What concerns or issues does the community have about your topic? In kind, your context also is located within your field’s discourse community. Whatever location that may be (a stage, a podium, a classroom, a newspaper), write within that context.

General Requirements:

- ◇ No required page length (and it doesn’t have to be a written text), but the general effort equivalent of 6-8 pages
- ◇ Use research you’ve done for the past two essays to inform how and what you compose here
- ◇ Your “text,” whatever form it may take, needs to be constructed in the style of your field’s discourse community
- ◇ Your project also needs to contribute to your field (meaning, don’t just write a review or summary of something—make a point that hasn’t been made before or argue for an issue in a different way)
- ◇ You will also give a presentation of this project around the final draft due date, details of which will be forthcoming

Questions? Ask me and we can brainstorm an interesting project together.

Happy Writing!