

## Project 1: Discourse Community Report

We belong to... how many different groups? Family, a class, church group, sports team, professional association, work. Lots. John Swales calls those “Discourse Communities” which are characterized by six things, including a broadly agreed set of common goals, mechanisms for communicating with each other, a “language” or discourse all its own, informal procedures for joining the DC, and genres that they prefer to use. That means DCs take specific places in society: special interest groups, cultural minorities, professional associations, and demographic groups put those characteristics to work to sway political leaders or influence public policy, or even simply maintain their own status and their members status.

Your mission for this Project is to pick a DC that interests you or that you’re a member of, jump in to analyze how it works as a DC, and write us a report about what you find. That’s going to mean interviewing or observing a DC in action, as well as doing a rhetorical analysis of one of its texts or genres or artifacts.

Sound confusing? It’s not. It’s actually kind of fun.

### Readings:

- Perri Klass, “She’s Your Basic LOL in NAD”
- Rebecca Ramos on Nursing -- Student Discourse Community Ethnography
- Dana Lynn Driscoll, “Introduction to Primary Research”
- Richard Straub, “Responding, Really Responding, to Other People’s Writing”
- Donald Murray, “Internal Revision”

### Writing Assignment:

We’ll be working on the idea of Discourse Communities, Rhetoric and Genre, but the Report itself will be about a specific Discourse Community of your choice. Specific Guidelines are below the Schedule and Due Dates.

### Schedule and Due Dates:

**Tue 9/03** *What is a Discourse Community? What’s a Rhetorical Situation? And what do they have to do with each other?* We’ll look at what a DC is and how it communicates with itself and people outside its boundaries. You’ll get to chart a few of your own DCs and work with the idea of Rhetorical Situations. Homework: 1) Read the Ramos example on Open Lab and Perri Klass’ essay, then write a short post where you react to the idea of a Discourse Community: what are some of yours, did Klass’ essay remind you of any DC you’re a part of and why, have you ever written anything like this and how do you feel about doing one? 2) Decide on which Discourse Community you want to examine. Fill out the Prep sheet to bring in next Tuesday. Feel free to begin setting up interviews or thinking about how you’re going to observe your chosen DC. **No class Thur 9/05.**

**Tue 9/10** *Doing Primary Research & Ethnographies.* Dana Lynn Driscoll (the link is below) has a wonderful article on doing primary research, including interviews and observations. We’ll go over some of her suggestions and start writing research questions. Homework: Bring in a text or cultural artifact that is used by or means something to the DC you’ve chosen.

**Thur 9/12** *How to do a rhetorical analysis.* And not just of written text, either. We’ll analyze an example each in class. Homework: Bring in whatever interviews and/or field notes you have. We’ll start organizing your Project reports. **FYI: the rough draft is due next Thur 9/19.**

**Tue 9/17**      **Brainstorming with field notes.** Just like I said. We'll get into groups and help each other figure things out. I'll help, too. I hope. Homework: Rough Draft of the Project report on Open Lab by start of class

**Thur 9/19**      **Peer Workshop? Are you serious...?** We'll read Rich Straub's piece in class, and talk about how to *really* help each other get our ideas in good order. Homework: A Reviewer's Memo to your potential writing group members.

**Tue 9/24**      **Workshop Draft.** You'll use those Reviewer's Memos to help each other in a real workshop setting. We'll talk about how to do that well. Homework: Read Donald Murray and write a brief response to his ideas as they apply to you.

**Thur 9/26**      **Revision Workshop.** We'll talk about the reading, and apply it to a piece I bring in. You'll get notes from me about where I think your own Revision might go. Homework: Write a memo to yourself and to me about what plans you have for Revising your Draft. ***The Revised Draft and this Revision Plan Memo are due Thur, 10/3.***