

Reflective Essay & Portfolio: Looking Back & Looking Forward

An Essay Progression for English Composition II. Required to Complete Course.

ESSAY PROMPT

On the very first day of class, we had set goals for empowering ourselves as communicators and critical thinkers—in our English Composition classroom, in our classes across the disciplines, in familiar and unfamiliar settings, and in our personal lives. In our first few weeks together, we adapted a toolkit of writing strategies that helped us write an organized essay. Now we will finish the semester with a new narrative essay, one in which you reflect on your experience, challenges, and growth over the past four months. In our final weeks together, we will empower ourselves to reflect metacognitively and to envision how we can transfer what we have learned this semester to contexts beyond our classroom.

Explore one of the following questions in essay form. The options are flexible by design, and I encourage you to write about topics that you care about. Whatever topic you choose, focus on how your topic relates to how you communicate, read, write, think, work, study, and/or learn. Quote and cite at least some writing you have done this semester, both inside and outside our classroom, both at school and beyond.

- OPTION 1. Narrate how you have changed over the past four months. Imagine how this might affect your goals, decisions, or attitudes moving forward.
- OPTION 2. Describe what you value as a writer, thinker, or artist. Narrate how this may have changed over time. Imagine how this may change, evolve, or become clearer in the future.
- OPTION 3. Narrate what kinds of writing and communication you have practiced over the past four months, both in and out of school. Imagine where else you could use what you have learned.
- OPTION 4. Describe how the work you have done this semester empowers you for the next steps in your academic and personal life. Feel free to reflect on your uncertainties and challenges.
- OPTION 5. Narrate the most important, frustrating, or thought-provoking conversations that you participated in over the past four months. Imagine how you might continue reflecting on these conversations in the future.

Write for someone who knows little to nothing about your topic and personal experience. It may help if you also imagine writing for someone who isn't Professor Josh, who doesn't know Professor Josh, and who has never taken English Composition. Include a brief introduction, a global statement that directly addresses the question, body paragraphs in APEC structure, a brief conclusion, and a title. For this essay, use personal experience, anecdotes, and your own writing as the main evidence for your assertions. As long as you meet this requirement, you can also include and cite any other textual evidence that helps you explore your assertions in detail. Include a word count at the end of each Draft. For Draft 1, submit 1000-1500 words (approximately 4-6 pages before Works Cited), which you will revise for Draft 2.

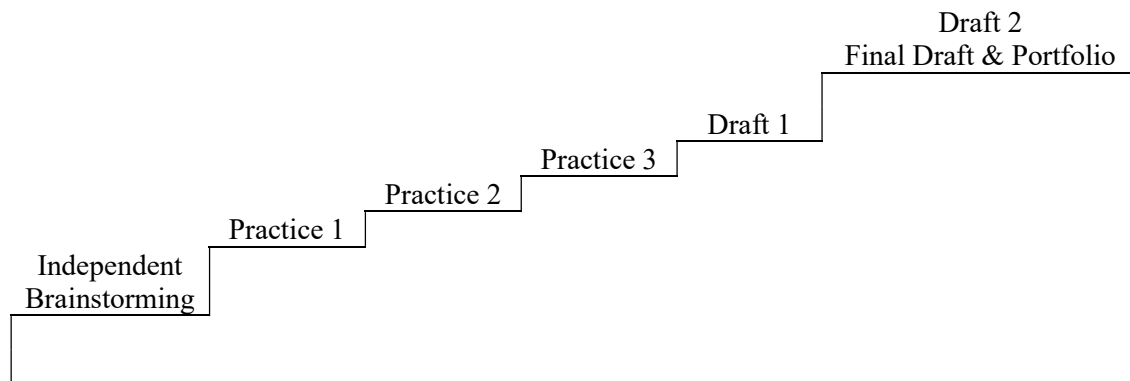
PORTFOLIO

Organize your writing from this semester into one digital text file. Include all your typed Start Writing assignments, Practice assignments, and Drafts from the Discourse Project progression, the Inquiry-Based Research progression, the Repurpose with Persuasion progression, and the Reflective Essay progression. Type or paste any Start Writing assignments that you have, including any writing you did for online class discussion. You may exclude all annotations. Based on the length of these writing assignments, your portfolio will likely include 6,000+ words (30+ pages, including in-line citations and works cited). If you had missed any assignments, you do not need to make these up in order to submit the Portfolio.

Clearly label each assignment and create automatic page numbers. Name your file according to the following template: LastName FirstName ENG1121 Section Semester FINAL PORTFOLIO. Examples specific to your course section are available later in this packet. ~~By email,~~ On Blackboard, submit your portfolio as a Word/PDF document by the date listed on the course schedule. ~~Do not submit a printed copy of the entire portfolio. Submit a printed copy of the Reflective Essay only.~~

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OVERVIEW

For the Reflective Essay, you will reflect on your own writing from this semester. Through a progression of practice assignments and drafts, you will submit a final draft of 1000-1500 words (approximately 4-6 pages before Works Cited) in any varieties of English that you choose.

For the Portfolio, you will organize and resubmit all of your typed Start Writing assignments, Practice assignments, and Drafts as a single electronic file. Based on the length of these writing assignments, your portfolio will include at least 6,000 words (at least 30 pages, including in-line citations and works cited).

WHAT'S THE POINT OF A PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT?

Each Practice is a take-home writing assignment that builds toward and can be used to construct Draft 1. For example, Practice 1 asks you to write a few sentences that closely read a specific text, while Practice 3 asks you to expand your previous assignments into a few paragraphs. In this way, the Practice assignments are neither whole drafts nor isolated assignments. They begin a guided path through the writing process. Instead of simply telling you to submit a Compare & Contrast Essay one month from now, I've broken down the writing process into smaller actionable steps so that you can exchange feedback with me and with your peers along the way.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF A DRAFT?

Each Draft is a writing assignment in which you make a full attempt at the essay. However, a single attempt will rarely be enough to create a strong piece of writing. The writing process, put simply, is an ongoing cycle of three modes: Generating New Writing, Revising, and Editing. Especially in the first two modes, you practice strategies for creativity, critical thinking, reading, writing, and discussing. A single Draft would provide you with a platform to engage intensely with these strategies. But each subsequent Draft offers you space to get some strategic distance from what you've written, workshop your draft with real readers, approach your ideas and writing with a fresh perspective, and then make major changes. From one Draft to the next, your goal is to continue generating new writing and to revise at least one-third of what you had written. In this sense, revision is *re-envisioning* what you had first submitted. As you approach the final Draft, you can then dramatically shift your focus from generating new writing and revising to editing.

To help you jumpstart revision and editing, I provide feedback as outlined below, I reserve office hours to discuss with you individually and in small groups, and I coordinate peer reviews for you to exchange feedback with peers, who themselves are in the middle of the writing process.

HOW TO SUBMIT ASSIGNMENTS

- Type ~~and print~~ all assignments in Times New Roman, 12pt black font, 2.0 spaced with 1” margins on 8.5”x11” white paper, ~~double sided if possible, stapled~~. Prepare in-line citations and Works Cited in MLA format for each assignment. Include your name and the assignment title.
- Consult the Course Schedule for related readings and due dates. ~~Submit all writing assignments by the beginning of class in person or in my mailbox~~. For each day (rounded up) that an assignment is late, the grade will be reduced by 20% of the maximum possible grade. Computer, printer, or file errors will not excuse lateness; back up, store, or synchronize your files with free cloud programs like Google Drive, Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive, Box, or Amazon Drive.
- ~~If you are absent, you are responsible for (i) emailing relevant assignments by the start of class and (ii) submitting printed copies by the next class in person or in my mailbox. Otherwise, the assignment is late. To catch up on what you missed in class, (iii) consult the Course Schedule and visit me during office hours.~~

FEEDBACK

- PRACTICE 1 – DRAFT 1. I will grade your writing based on completion, according to Rubric A.

RUBRIC A

Work	Complete the task and practice specific writing strategies as defined by the prompt and syllabus		
Grade	0	√-	√, √+
Credit	0	50%	100%
Feedback	Suggestions for next steps, questions, or resources as needed		

- DRAFT 1. You will use a guided worksheet to do a peer review, during which you will focus on generating new writing and brainstorming major revisions.
- DRAFT 2 (FINAL DRAFT). I will grade your writing according to Rubric C (attached). Overall, your final draft will be graded on specificity of detail, relevance to the prompt, organization, and sentence structure. If I do not receive Draft 2 within the lateness window, I will treat Draft 1, if submitted, as Draft 2.
- PORTFOLIO. I will grade your Portfolio according to the total number of completed assignments and the total word count.

OPTIONAL DRAFT: DRAFT 4

- You may submit Draft 4 for one essay progression of your choice. Draft 4 is due at the start of class on the date listed on the syllabus. No late submissions will be accepted.
- You must attach a three-paragraph reflection that guides me through how you revised and edited the paper.
- Between Draft 3 and Draft 4, lateness and length penalties will carry over. The higher grade will entirely replace the lower grade.