**Paper #2: Essay on Web Writing and Student Engagement**

Draft Due for in-class Peer Review: **Tuesday 10/24 \***\**Please bring 3 hard copies of your paper to do*

*in-class peer review.* (I am happy to print these for you; email me your draft.)

Final Draft: *Posted to the class blog* by the end of the day on **Tuesday 10/31**

In this essay, you will strengthen your knowledge of the existing scholarship that encourages classes like ours – on digital writing— and projects like the ones you are doing—using online platforms to develop thinking and writing. We are going to broaden our knowledge of digital media as it is used on college campuses and, in turn, think creatively about how to use digital media in our own lives and careers.

In short:

Your assignment is to ***research and find at least 3 additional scholarly articles about and then write a modified research paper (6-7 pages if it were double spaced in Word; ~1500 words).*** *The paper should engage with a total of 5 sources—at least three of which are from outside of class (meaning you can use two from our class readings).*

In more detail: here is how I would like you to proceed:

* Using some of the key terms you come up with based on our class discussion before fall pause, and today, 10/19, as well as our readings this term, search for *analytical* articles and locate at least 3 additional essays on Digital Writing. (Remember our class discussion about what an “analytical” source is.)
* Write a 6-7 page paper (1,450-1,700 words)

1. In the first 4-5 pages, write about the research you have gathered. Think of this as a summary of the field of knowledge, but write it as though you are educating your peers about what digital writing is and why it is (or isn’t) important *according to your 5 articles*. Please quote from the articles and cite them correctly. The audience of the essay, however, will be an educated audience reading them on our website. Please adjust the voice accordingly. These are essays designed for a public readership. (See the Tips and Tricks on the back of this sheet.)
2. In the final 2-3 pages I want you to offer your own contributions on what you think classes about digital writing can offer students like you. In other words, I want to hear *your ideas and understanding* about how digital writing in this course, or in others, one fits into/augments/supports the work you are doing as a student here at Dickinson College. I encourage you to think specifically about your semester project, your particular major, experiences you have had in other courses/internships/co-curricular activities, and, finally, your goals beyond Dickinson. Our readings have focused on Liberal Arts education and civic engagement and you are welcome to think about these ideas as well.

**Paper #2: Helpful Hints and Tips on Writing an Essay for the Web**

On the surface our second paper project *looks* like the traditional research assignment. You have located outside, critical sources and you are doing your part to weave together aspects of these texts to create your own “state of the field.” However, what sets our assignment apart from the more traditional research projects is that instead of writing this paper for me—your professor—I want you to compose this with your classmates and fellow Dickinsonians in mind. This essay is designed to educate a public audience about what is going on in the field of web writing and digital learning. Plus, it creates a space where you have the chance to voice your ideas and be creative about what digital writing offers students like you.

In his essay entitled “What Makes a Good Web Essay,” Jack Dougherty[[1]](#footnote-1) urges his students to “blend textual narrative and digital evidence for a public audience.” In the essay, he then poses a series of questions to help his students as they compose and revise their essays. I have slightly edited/altered his questions to better suit our needs this semester, but they are as follows:

1. Does your web-essay present a compelling argument or story about a significant aspect of engaging students in web-based learning? Does it inspire the reader to think in new ways?
2. Are the claims supported with appropriate evidence and is the reasoning well developed? Is counter-evidence fully considered?
3. Does it make effective use of web-essay format by integrating narrative text with appropriate digital elements (such as links, photos, charts, maps, videos)?
4. Is the web-essay logically organized and well written?
5. Is the essay written in a voice that is accessible to any educated reader? (In other words, is it written for your peers, not just me?)
6. Does it include sufficient background for audiences unfamiliar with the topic?
7. Does it cite all sources in an appropriate format that future readers may find?

Good luck and happy writing!

1. You can find the full text here: <http://webwriting.trincoll.edu/good-web-essay/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)