Professional Manuscript Project

Overview: Teachers write for their students, for parents, and for administrators. But they also write for each other by composing articles for publication in teaching journals. For this project, analyze a professional journal for educators, and consider how best to write your way into the on-going conversation within that forum. Compose a manuscript on the topic of writing or writing pedagogy. Your piece should be relevant to your work, pertinent to this course, and appropriate for submission to the selected journal.

Goals: The main goals of this project are for you to learn more about how to
- explore an idea or question that you have about writing or writing pedagogy;
- write for about your ideas for colleagues;
- make composing choices that are well-suited to your audience, purpose, situation, genre, and role.

Audience: Your primary audience will be the educators who read the professional journal to which you aim to submit your manuscript. Secondary audiences include your classmates (who will be interested in your ideas and writing approaches) and me (as an experienced reviewer for education journals and as your instructor). A version of your work on this project may also be posted to your Web portfolio for this course.

Procedures and Requirements: Throughout this process, you should discuss your work with your classmates and with me—both to share what you are learning and to solicit feedback on your ideas. Note that you may compose your Professional Submission manuscript in collaboration with an ENG 306 classmate, if you choose.

1. Every time you work on the project, reserve 5 minutes to journal about your experiences. Use your reflective journal as a place to think about your writing process and the composing that you are doing. What kinds of things are you thinking about and feeling as you write your way into this project? What strategies are you using? How are others responding to your writing? What challenges are you facing? What insights are you developing about writing, teaching, and learning?

2. Choose your topic (focus on some aspect of writing or writing pedagogy) and an audience (a journal for educators that you hope will publish your manuscript). You may choose whether to respond to a call for manuscripts or to work on a general (unsolicited) submission. E-mail me your brief project proposal no later than Friday, October 28. Describe:
   a. your topic (an idea or question that will guide your writing);
   b. your primary audience (i.e., the title of the professional journal to which you wish to submit, along with a brief description of the journal’s audience and purpose);
   c. how your topic is relevant to your work in your program, major, minor, or area of emphasis;
   d. how your topic is relevant to this course; and
   e. why your topic will be of value to the readers of the journal.

3. Carefully analyze your audience (your forum) by typing answers to the questions on the Forum Analysis guide sheet (coursepack pp. 210-211). You may choose whether to group your answers together into essay format or to make a numbered list of answers in sentence form. Submit a polished copy for my approval by Tuesday, November 1.

   You are encouraged to collaborate on this forum analysis with anyone else who is writing a manuscript for the same professional journal. If you choose to work together, list the names of all the collaborators on a single hard copy when you submit the forum analysis to me.

4. Investigate. As you explore your topic, choose the kinds of sources and documentation that will be a good match for your journal. Also study a mentor text—an article written in a structure or style that would be a good model for your writing. (Note that the mentor article may be about any topic.)
5. Complete your **manuscript**. Remember that the rhetorical choices in your writing—everything from the ideas, evidence, arguments, length, and level of detail to the organization, diction, tone, and style—should be determined by your GAPS (genre, audience, purpose, situation). In most cases, a manuscript of 7-8 double-spaced pages is a good match for course expectations.

Attach a copy of (a) your selected journal’s guidelines for writers (or call for manuscripts) and (b) your approved forum analysis to your completed manuscript. These guidelines will help me to evaluate your writing as a match for the audience you selected.

6. Finally, reread your reflective journal and your article manuscript, and write a **summative entry** in your reflective journal (about 500 words) that discusses your manuscript writing experience and what you learned through this project.

**Workshop drafts:** Meeting the due dates for the smaller assignments and workshop drafts is important for you and for your classmates who will be learning with you. Each time that you miss one of these deadlines or come unprepared for a workshop will result in a full grade reduction from your final score on the project.

**Due Date:** Your completed project is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, November 29. Turn in your reflective journal with the summative entry, your manuscript, a copy of your forum analysis, and a copy of your journal’s guidelines for writers.

**Grading:** The Professional Submission project is worth 25% of your final grade. I will grade your module holistically, meaning I will take all of the components together into account. Quality work will:

- Thoughtfully and creatively explore an important idea or question about writing or writing pedagogy.
- Show that you have taken care to study your audience, purpose, and situation; to understand your role; and to research the written genre conventions that are expected for your manuscript. These will be shown in your:
  - Ideas, arguments, and evidence;
  - Rhetorical moves;
  - Structure and organization;
  - Style;
  - Conventions of design, format, grammar, usage, mechanics; and
  - Documentation for any sources whose words, ideas, or illustrations cited or used in the project.
- Show your efforts to apply lessons from your mentor text about structure, style, and voice.
- Present accurate and insightful reflection about your writing and learning process for the project.
- Demonstrate an ethical approach to the writing processes and products.
- Exhibit a developed and accurate understanding of the principles addressed in class, in the assigned readings and activities, and in my responses to your work.