

Unit Plans for Exploratory Research Narrative

Week One

Day 1: Monday, January 12

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to the course
- Student Introductions
- Students will begin thinking about rhetoric and research

Plans:

1. Reflective Freewrite: Where do you get information when you need to know something? Why? How can you tell if the information is trustworthy? Try to explain your process.
2. Discuss freewrite responses with neighbors
3. Inform students that what they just wrote and discussed is a research process. We will be talking a lot more about research processes throughout the semester
4. Student introductions: Break into groups of 3 and introduce each other (name, intended major)
5. Go around and have students introduce each other
6. Go through Blackboard and homework
7. Pass out syllabi

Day 2 Wednesday, January 14

Learning Objectives:

- Students will review the concept of rhetoric
- Students will discuss the idea of discourse communities
- Students will be introduced to Exploratory Research Narrative Assignment Sheet

Plans:

1. Syllabus scavenger hunt
2. Answer syllabus questions
3. Group discussion: Get into groups of 3 and share your responses about rhetoric from the homework
4. Whole group: Discuss what rhetoric is and how rhetoric still has a place in research
5. Show Exploratory Narrative Assignment Sheet and explain how this class is structured around one research project that has different elements so that we can really wallow in complexity throughout the semester

6. Review HW

Day 3: Friday, January 16

Learning Objectives:

- Students will understand the difference between a traditional and exploratory research paper
- Students will begin to generate their own topics

Plans:

1. Use the homework questions and the exploratory example to generate a discussion about what makes this assignment a bit different.
2. Reflective Freewrite: Make a list of communities you belong to. These can be geographical, ethnic, work, hobbies, etc.
3. Whole group: Everyone has communities they belong to (a smoker, adopted, Japanese-American, a waiter, a musician, a citizen of Hialeah, an FIU student, a car owner/driver, a voter in Miami-Dade County, a Facebook user.)
4. I'm going to introduce a term: Discourse community. How anyone heard this term before? Let's look it up together.
5. Share some of the communities that they wrote down
6. Reflective Freewrite: Brainstorm problems that affect members of these communities. These should not be private problems between members, but community issues that would have significance to your reader. For example, what issues affect you as an FIU student? As a smoker? As a driver in Miami-Dade? (Remember, these should not be religious issues or issues of personal taste.) Consider the following: What contested questions cause disagreements? What decisions need to be made? What values are in conflict? What problems need to be solved?

These are some problems that students have written about recently:

- Access to recycling at FIU
- Access to birth control for teens
- Payment of college athletes
- Severe injuries in the NFL
- How to improve online courses
- How FIU can best serve student veterans with PTSD
- How Florida should regulate texting and driving
- How FIU can best teach international business
- How parents should teach children about body image and the media
- Traffic congestion between downtown and Miami Beach

- Do Americans work too hard? (maybe lead to a new major?)
 - Stress and anxiety in college students
 - Use of caffeine and Adderall among college students
 - Shopping addiction
 - Eating disorders
 - Gas prices
 - Treatment of ADHD
7. Share some responses
 8. Reflective Freewrite: Choose two or three of these issues and free-write or outline responses to the following questions: What is my position on this issue and why? What are alternative points of view on this issue? Why do people disagree about this issue? What evidence would I need to gather and what research might I need to do?
 9. Review HW

Week Two

Day 4: Monday, January 19

NO CLASS (MLK Day)

Day 5: Wednesday, January 21

Learning Objectives:

- Students will discuss what makes a good research question
- Students will workshop sample research questions as a class
- Students will workshop in pairs to provide personalized feedback

Plans:

1. Reflective Freewrite: What makes a good research question for an extended research paper like the one you'll be working on? Try to list some qualities of a good research question. What should you try to avoid when drafting a research question?
2. Discuss responses as a group. What do you want to accomplish with this research? How can your research question(s) help you with that?
3. Think about moving from a topic, to a specific issue within that topic, to a research question about that topic
4. Take volunteers and put their research questions on the projector.
5. Ask why they volunteered and what they'd like feedback on. What's working, what's not working? Prompt the class for feedback.

6. Workshop: Return to the research question(s) that you prepared for class today and try to revise to make more specific or clear.
7. In groups of 3, discuss what you revised and why.
8. Review HW

Day 6: Friday, January 23

Learning Objectives:

- Students will reflect on what makes a good class discussion, and how discussion in class relates to joining a conversation on the page, as well as reading with and against the grain
- Students will practice annotation strategies and reflect on the effects of different reading methods

Plans:

1. Reflective Freewrite: When have you had good classroom discussions before? What made those discussions good?
2. What do you think the point of classroom discussion is? What does it offer the class that, for instance, lecturing by a teacher doesn't?
3. What advice do you have for your fellow students about how to create good classroom discussions? What advice do you have for me, your teacher?
4. Discuss responses on the board
5. Mention reading with/against the grain and that this is a good way to get to know a text. Also, you can use notation strategies such as: Make a list on the board
6. Now, get into groups of 3. As a group, you are going to practice using annotation strategies with the article. Choose a notation reading strategy and use it to actively read the article.
7. Discuss the following questions with your group members:
8. Compare your notes to your group-members. Did you mark similar things in the essay, or did you mark different things? Does this method encourage you to read with the grain of the essay or against it? Did you discover anything new about the article by reading it this way? What do you think the main benefit of notating your reading this way is?
9. Review HW

Week Three

Day 7: Monday, January 26

Learning Objectives:

- Students will become familiar with the three-sentence evaluative bibliography
- Students will understand the differences in kinds of sources

- Students will begin to understand how to use the library resources

Plans:

1. Remind students that they need to submit an annotated bibliography that is separate from their narratives
2. Whole class: Why might someone doing research use an annotated bibliography? How might this project help you as you work through the semester?
3. Quickly show sample
4. Begin to discuss the difference between Google and library resources
5. Go through library tutorial
6. Remind students that we will meet in the Green Library for next class for a librarian tutorial
7. Review HW

Day 8: Wednesday, January 28

Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn how to use the library databases

Plans:

1. Meet in GL for library tutorial

Day 9: Friday, January 30

Learning Objectives:

- Students will understand how to recover rhetorical information from texts and contexts.
- Students will begin to evaluate sources based on the rhetorical situation of the source.

Plans:

1. Freewrite: What do you look for when evaluating a source? What makes a source credible? (for help, see A & B 668)
2. Discuss what guiding questions to ask in terms of evaluating sources (who, what when, where, why)
3. In groups of three, work to answer the questions about advising a student writer in selecting sources; project sample text scenario about advising a student writer; students work in groups and then share discussion with the class
4. If time, Freewrite: What are some of the possible benefits of using these guiding questions (who, what, when, where, why?) to unravel the rhetorical situation of a source?
5. Review HW/Remind about conferences

Week Four

Day 10: Monday, February 2

Conferences

Day 11: Wednesday, February 4

Learning Objectives:

- Students will discuss field research strategies
- Students will practice interviewing strategies by interviewing their classmates

Plans:

1. Review responses to HW in groups
2. Review responses to HW as a class and use questions to generate class discussion
3. Pair up with someone who you do not know and who you have never worked with before
4. Your initial research goal is to find out about their topic. Take 5 minutes to do so.
5. Spend 5 minutes generating follow-up questions to learn more about their topic, their research goals, and their goals for the project.
6. Reflective Freewrite:
 - What was difficult about the interviewing process?
 - What was easy about it?
 - What surprised you?
 - What did you learn from interviewing your classmate?
 - What will you do differently when conducting future interviews and observations?
7. Freewrite: Try to write a one-paragraph summary of what you've learned about your classmate and his/her topic. Try incorporating at least one quote as well.
8. Review HW

Day 12: Friday, February 6

Learning Objectives:

- Students will review different methods of incorporating sources, highlighting the different rhetorical effects of each
- Students will emphasize rhetorical effects of attributive tags/signal phrases
- Students will view EW citation resources
- Students will revise individually for source incorporation/citation

Plans:

1. Whole group: Discuss the definitions and uses of quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing

2. Make sure to discuss the use of attributive tags and ethos/clarity
3. Source Incorporation Workshop
 - (1) Review your draft and underline or highlight all information that comes from outside sources. This includes not only direct quotes from your sources, but any other facts or researched info that you've put in your own words.
 - (2) What are you telling your readers about the credibility of your sources? Are you introducing each source so that your readers will know where each piece of information comes from? Each piece of outside information should have some sort of introduction so that readers know where it comes from and why it's credible. Who is the author? Where was the info published? Etc.
 - (3) Are you citing each source?
 - Discuss formats for in-text citation and works cited page w/ examples from the EW
 - In-text citations should function as links to your works cited page.
 - What's in the attributive tag will affect what you need to include in the parenthetical citation.
 - (4) Are you quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing?
 - Now, mark each quote, summary or paraphrase in the margins of your draft with a Q, S or P.
 - Discuss the importance of having a balance of each method of source incorporation, as well as the dangers of creating a "collage" of quotes.

Week Five

Day 13: Monday, February 9

Learning Objectives:

- Students will understand how to use narrative elements and concrete language to make their Exploratory Essays stories of research instead of summaries of research.

Plans:

1. Reflective Freewrite: What makes a story a story instead of an and-then chronology? Make a list of elements that a story should have.
2. Whole group discussion about narrative elements:
 - Depiction of events through time (coherence/transitions)
 - Connectedness (unity and coherence)
 - Tension or conflict (what's the tension in this story? Different POVs/Arguable topics)

- Resolution, recognition, retrospective interpretation (conclusion/change/what have you learned and how has your perspective on the topic changed?)
 - Concrete details (specific summaries of research)
3. Get into pairs: Now pair up with a partner and exchange second drafts. Take fifteen minutes to read your partner's draft, marking places where he or she uses a feature of narrative well. Be sure to identify what feature is being used.
 4. Try to find an example of each of the things we've talked about: connectedness, depiction of events through time, tension, reflection/recognition, and concrete language.
 5. Now look back over your partner's draft, looking for places where the narrative elements are weak. In each place, provide some advice about how to make the piece more story-like. Remember to focus on the features we've been talking about today: connectedness, depiction of events through time, tension, reflection/recognition, and concrete language
 6. Review HW

Day 14: Wednesday, February 11

Learning Objectives:

- Students will reflect on field research conducted so far
- Students will determine what other information could be obtained from further research
- Students will analyze research and determine relevance to research question and reflect on how research could be incorporated

Plans:

1. Groups of 3 or 4 and alternate group discussion with whole class discussion. Groups of 3-4: give your group members an update on your field research process.
 - Return to research question(s) and then review field research notes. What material in your notes responds to your research question?
 - What were the most interesting things you learned from your field research? Did you come up with any new questions based on your field research?
 - Did your field research give you any ideas for things you want to look up through secondary sources?
 - Look at your exploratory draft: How will you incorporate your field research? What essential quotes can you pull? What can you summarize? What can you paraphrase?
2. Reflective Freewrite: How you ever participated in field research before? If so, what was the context? What do you think some benefits are of field research? What can we gain from primary (field) research that we might not be able to from secondary sources? Did/do you enjoy doing field research? Why or why not? In what ways do you think that you may do field research in the future?
3. Review HW

Day 15: Friday, February 13

Learning Objectives:

- Students will revise their annotated bibliographies for three-sentence evaluative annotation

Plans:

1. Reflective Freewrite: In what ways can an annotated bibliography help during research? What have I learned by compiling this bibliography? What was the most challenging aspect of this writing project?
2. Students share their responses in groups
3. Students share their responses as a class
4. Annotated Bibliography Workshop:
 - (1) Sources: Make sure that your sources are in MLA format with hanging margins/discuss purposes of such conventions
 - (2) Look at each source and annotation. Do you have three sentences?
 - (3) Does each annotation include rhetorical information about the source (purpose, audience, genre, biases, scholarly, etc.)?
 - (4) Does each annotation include a summary of the source's content? Make sure that you engage with the author's main idea(s).
 - (5) Does each annotation include your own evaluation of the source? (What are the sources strengths and weaknesses? How useful is this source? How are you planning on using this source?)
5. If time, switch annotated bibliographies with a partner and give feedback, focusing on the annotations
6. Review HW

Week 6

Day 16: Monday, February 16

Learning Objectives:

- Students will take their drafts through a series of revision exercises to improve transitions, source incorporation/analysis, and reflective writing.

Plans:

1. Small Group Discussion: In groups of 3, discuss what you think are the strengths and weaknesses of your draft.
2. Revision Workshop:

- (1) **UNITY:** Annotate your draft by making notes in the margins to tell you what each paragraph is about. If a paragraph seems to have more than one main topic, that's a good sign that perhaps it can be split up into two unified paragraphs.
 - (2) **TRANSITIONS/COHERENCE:** Now, look at the spaces between each paragraph. Is there a clear transition? Remember that this should be a narrative.
 - (3) **INCORPORATING SOURCES:** Scan through your draft and look for information from sources. Is each source introduced thoroughly so that the reader knows why the source is credible and trustworthy? Are you incorporating the source material smoothly by quoting, summarizing or paraphrasing?
 - (4) **SOURCE ANALYSIS/REFLECTION:** After you've presented the info from your source, do you spend time reflecting on what you learned from it? You should be letting your readers know how each source changed your understanding of your topic.
3. **Reflective Freewrite:** Take 5 minutes and ask yourself what you've learned since you started this process. Where are you now with this topic/question compared to a few weeks ago? What do you still not understand? What else is left to research?
 4. If time, share freewrites as a class
 5. Review HW

Day 17: Wednesday, February 18

Learning Objectives:

- Students will engage in peer review and provide additional feedback to their group members

Plans:

1. **Reflective Freewrite:** Think of at least three questions that you'd like your peer review partners to answer about your own paper. What do you want feedback on?
2. **Peer Review:**
 - (1) How could the essay's introduction do more to hook your interest and explain why this topic is significant for the writer and for a larger community? Could the writer provide more background on the topic, for example?
 - (2) If you had to recreate the writer's research process, could you? Mark places where you couldn't tell how the writer found a source or what led to that source.
 - (3) Another part of an exploratory essay involves the writer's summary, analysis and response to each source. Mark places where you see the writer thinking critically about the credibility and relevance of their sources. Also mark places where this is missing so that the writer knows that he or she needs to include more of their own summary and discussion of each source.

- (4) How else could the writer wallow in the complexity of this topic? Based on what you now know about the writer's topic and their research so far, what other ideas or perspectives do you think the writer should research?
- (5) Does the writer's conclusion provide a clear explanation of the ways their thinking has changed about the topic?
- (6) Make suggestions on spelling, punctuation and grammar by trying to identify patterns of error. For example, if the essay contains multiple examples of incorrect semicolon use, point out a specific example and then allow the author to find the others.

3. Review HW

Day 18: Friday, February 20

Learning Objectives:

- Students will engage in global and local revisions
- Students will reflect on their writing process

Plans:

1. Reflective Freewrite: Freewrite for 2-3 minutes: what will be the next step in your research/writing/revision?
2. Reflective Freewrite: Reflection for conclusion (or a pause in the research process). Take 5 minutes to freewrite about what you've learned from your research so far. Where are you now compared to where you were when you started this topic? How has your understanding of the topic changed? What do you still want to know? What still confuses you?
3. Share your freewrites with your peers
4. Mini-workshop: Ambiguous Pronouns
 - Go through your Narrative and highlight/underline every time you use the word "this."
 - Make sure that you are being as specific as being by including what "this" refers to.
 - For example:
This was helpful to my research process. (ambiguous)
This scholarly article about second-language learning was helpful to my research process. (clear)
5. Review submission instructions and take any final questions

Week Seven

Day 19: Monday, February 23

Learning Objectives:

- Students will reflect on their exploratory writing with journal entry and discussion

Plans:

1. Student will discuss their reflection questions in groups, followed by class discussion that focuses on different purposes for writing:
 - (1) What skills have you learned or practiced as a result of working on this paper? Be as specific and comprehensive as possible.
 - (2) Summarize your research process. How did you find useful sources? Where did you encounter difficulties? How did you deal with these difficulties? Which parts of your research were most rewarding? Which parts were most surprising?
 - (3) The final project for this course asks you to use research to propose a solution to the problem that you've explored. How will you use what you've learned so far? What will be your next step? What research do you still need to do to understand how to best solve this problem?
2. Students will work in groups to introduce Proposal for the final paper. In groups of 3, read the assignment sheet for the Proposal for the Final Paper and answer these questions:
 - If you had to explain this assignment to someone outside of the class how would you describe it?
 - In what ways does this writing project link your exploratory writing with your future argument-based writing?
 - In what ways are aspects of this writing project similar to and different from writing that you do for other classes or outside of FIU?
3. Review HW