

Critical Writing, Reading and Research I (IN 150 Section 16)
T/R 12:30-1:45
Fall 2014

Instructor: Dr. Jeff Kirchoff

Office: 402C Shilling Hall

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday 2:00-3:00; other hours available by appointment

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Official Course Description

Critical Writing, Reading, and Research I is designed to develop students as critical writers, readers, and researchers. Emphasis is placed on writing and reading as the path to critical thinking. Students are asked to read and critique texts actively, deliberately, and carefully; to write polished, informed essays for personal, public, and/or specialized audiences; and to reflect on the uses of reading and writing in their public and personal lives to better understand themselves, their communities, and the world. A library research component is introduced and integrated into the course. Section offerings vary in approach.

Kirchoff's Addendum

This is a workshop style class. To that end, students will be asked to regularly interact with their peers and myself, discussing assigned reading, student writing, and multi-media clips. Furthermore, students will encounter and participate in a wide variety of activities; among them, we will discuss the writing process and as such, engage in conversation regarding invention, drafting, revising, and publishing strategies. Additionally, we'll begin to discuss important concepts such as audience awareness, research strategies, close reading, argumentation, and critical analysis, while also broaching topics such as using proper mechanics and grammar in academic essays.

To achieve these various goals, you will write five short essays. Additionally, you will be asked to compose texts informally throughout the semester on a daily basis. As such, you will want to come to class prepared each and every day to do in-class writing.

CWRR Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of CWRR I and II, students will be able to:

- Read and critique texts actively, deliberately, and carefully
- Write polished informed essays for personal, public, and/or specialized audiences
- Conduct research to participate in academic inquiry
- Reflect on the uses of reading and writing in their public and personal lives to better understand themselves, their communities, and the world

Required Texts and Materials

Models for Writers 11th edition by Alfred Rosa and Paul Eschholz (ISBN 0312552017)

A Pocket Style Manual (6th edition) by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers (ISBN 1457602393)

A flash drive or free-storage service (e.g. Dropbox) to save and retrieve your work

A folder with two pockets

If you have a laptop, I strongly encourage you to bring it to class (fully charged). This will make our in-class writing and workshoping a bit easier. If you do not own a laptop, that is fine; however, you will be frequently asked to bring printed drafts of your work to class and, for in-class writing, you will need to be prepared to compose by hand.

Course Policies

Attendance: Because so much of the learning process takes place in the classroom, attendance is an integral part of this class. Additionally, I value all voices in the classroom and enjoy the dynamic a full class offers. That said, I understand emergencies do occur and that individuals have a life beyond academia. Thus, students are afforded four “free” absences (the equivalent of two weeks of class); please note I do not need to know about the nature of your absence—just let me know ahead of time if you will miss class (a 24 hour notice is appreciated). For each absence after the fourth, the offending student’s “Attendance and Participation” grade will go down a full letter grade (e.g., five absences will mean the best possible “Attendance and Participation” grade will be a “B”). Note that if a student has an extended and/or serious illness the result is usually an incomplete or medical withdrawal from the course. **Any student who misses more than 8 class sessions—the equivalent of four weeks of class—will not pass this course.**

Tardiness: Try to be on time. I'm a punctual sort of fellow, and I tend to get class started at the scheduled time. When people come in late, it disrupts the flow of class and more importantly, the late individual will miss key information from the beginning of class. If tardiness becomes a problem for a particular student, I will talk with that person individually.

Late Assignments: I do not accept late work unless prior arrangements have been made. This is a non-negotiable policy; however, if you have questions or are worried about completing an assignment on time, talk to me well before the due date and we can come up with a plan of action. Note: "well before the due date" does not mean 24 hours before the assignment is due. I generally like to hold these sorts of conferences a week ahead of the due date. If someone contacts me 24 hours before a project is due, my response may not be very favorable. This policy extends to daily work as well.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when one person presents another person's words or ideas as her/his own. It is a serious offense that can result in an F for the course. Please see me if you have any questions concerning plagiarism.

Respect: My goal is for everyone to feel welcome and comfortable in the classroom, so please treat everyone in this class with respect. This should be a friendly, positive environment open to discussion and feedback. To that end, there is no tolerance for individuals who intentionally disrupt class or contribute to a hostile learning environment. Examples of disruptive behavior include (but are not limited to) talking or texting on a cell phone, speaking out of turn, facebooking, emailing, checking fantasy sport teams, swearing excessively, sleeping, attacking individuals verbally or physically, talking to friends while others are talking/working, or staunchly refusing to participate. If I see this kind of behavior occurring, you will be asked to leave the classroom and you will be counted absent for that day. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these policies, let me know and I'll be happy to answer any questions.

Food is permissible, as long as it does not become a distraction.

Participation is expected of all of us. Please come to class ready to ask questions, share ideas, and provide feedback to others. Please note that your participation will be a part of your overall assessment (see below).

Peer Reviews will be held throughout the semester. These are required of all students. I will often provide a handout that will guide your peer review; these handouts will usually invite peer reviewers to provide some very specific commentary to authors. At the end of a peer review session, the peer reviewers will return these commentary worksheets to the author. These worksheets are to be attached to the final version of the assignment. Please note that I will not grade work that has not been peer reviewed.

Email is a great tool for communication. However, I ask that when you send me an email to use a proper salutation (e.g. Hi Dr. Kirchoff), complete sentences, and identifying information. This is a matter of common courtesy. As I mention above, I will make a good faith effort in responding to email queries within 24 hours.

To that end, sending documents as *attachments* to an email is a perfectly valid way to get feedback on a project. To ensure readability, please save your documents as a .rtf, .docx, or .pdf.

Lastly, I prefer to be addressed as “Dr. Kirchoff,” “Professor Kirchoff,” or “Jeff” —whichever you are most comfortable with. I will not respond to nicknames, Mr. Kirchoff, or other variations of my name.

Disability Accommodation Policy

Please address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you should submit your documentation to the Office of Student Success at Millikin University, currently located in Staley Library 014.

Academic Honesty

All students are expected to uphold professional standards for academic honesty and integrity in their research, writing, and related performances. Academic honesty is the standard we expect from all students. Read the Student Handbook for further details about offenses involving academic integrity at: <http://www.millikin.edu/handbook/>.

Staley Library also hosts a web site on Preventing Plagiarism, which includes the complete university policy. It is located at: <http://www.millikin.edu/staley/services/instruction/Pages/plagiarism-faculty.aspx>. Visit and carefully read the Preventing Plagiarism web site.

The Faculty has the right and the responsibility to hold students to high ethical standards in conduct and in works performed, as befits a scholar at the university. Faculty members have the responsibility to investigate all suspected breaches of academic integrity that arise in their courses. They will make the determination as to whether the student violated the Academic Integrity Policy. Should the faculty member determine that the violation was intentional and egregious, he or she will decide the consequences, taking into account the severity and circumstances surrounding the violation, and will inform the student in writing, forwarding a copy of the letter to the Registrar and to the Dean of Student Development.

This letter will be destroyed when the student graduates from the University unless a second breach of integrity occurs, or unless the first instance is of sufficient magnitude to result in failure of the course, with an attendant XF grade recorded in the transcript. If an XF is assigned for the course, the faculty letter of explanation becomes a permanent part of the student's record. If a second violation occurs subsequent to the first breach of integrity, the Dean of Student Development will begin disciplinary and judicial processes of the University, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

If a student receives an XF for a course due to academic dishonesty, this remains as a permanent grade and cannot be removed from the transcript. However, students may repeat the course for credit toward graduation. Some programs and majors have more explicit ethical standards, which supersede this Policy, and violation of which may result in dismissal from some programs or majors within the University. If you have difficulty with any assignment in this course, please see me rather than consider academic dishonesty.

The Writing Center

You can get additional help with your writing by visiting Millikin's Writing Center. This free service will help students develop global strategies to improve writing, reading, and thinking processes. Student consultants are willing to help writers with all aspects of writing, ranging from brainstorming to overcoming writer's block to polishing a piece. The Writing Center is located in the Staley Library on the second floor (203). Walk-ins are accepted, but scheduled appointments have priority. You can call for an appointment at 424-6353 or make your appointment online through myMillikin. See <https://www.millikin.edu/academics/cas/muwc/Pages/default.aspx> for more information.

Course Assignments

Attendance and Participation (20% of final grade)

As indicated above, attendance and participation will be assessed in this class. Plan on coming to class prepared to discuss any assigned readings; bringing relevant, academic questions to class is always welcomed as well. Additionally, participation also includes in-class writing exercises, end-of-the-class writing exercises (see below), peer review, completing homework, and actively contributing to small group work.

A Brief Word About End of the Class Writing Exercises

Beginning August 28th, the last five to ten minutes of each class period will be reserved for a kind of "freewriting." Like any skill, writing can be improved with practice. As such, I want to ensure that every day, students get the opportunity to engage with writing. Sometimes I will provide a writing prompt; other times I might ask a student to provide a writing prompt. There will be times when students will be invited to participate in an open-write, where the topic is up to the individual student. Once a week, students will be asked to turn these exercises in to earn a completion grade that will contribute to your overall attendance and participation grade. Note: you must be in class in order to complete these exercises. As such, students may miss up to four of these exercises with no harm to their overall grade.

Formal Essays (60%)

Throughout the semester, students will turn in five short, formal essays. Assignment sheets will be distributed for each project. The essays will be:

- A short personal narrative (10% of final grade)
- A compare/contrast essay (10% of final grade)
- Speculating about causes (10% of final grade)
- Short Argument (15% of final grade)

→ Vetting *Wikipedia* (15% of final grade)

Portfolio (20% of final grade)

At the end of the semester, students will turn in a portfolio of their best work produced in this class. This portfolio will include three pieces of revised student writing—chosen by the individual—accompanied by the original version (complete with instructor commentary). Additionally, students will compose a short, two to three page original piece that discusses a) what “good writing” is b) how their portfolio demonstrates “good writing” and c) how they’ve grown as writers throughout the semester. A more detailed assignment sheet will be distributed at the end of the semester. **Please note—I will not grade a final portfolio if you have not turned in all the essays.**

All writing assignments are to be turned in as hard copies. Please remember to staple or paper-clip your essays when you turn them in. Additionally, your essays should be written in Calibri 12 pt or Times New Roman 12pt. Format Your page as follows:

Your name

My name [Dr. Kirchoff—note that points will be deducted for misspelling my name]

Class Title

Due Date

Title of Essay

Your Essay writing begins here.

Grading Standards

A writing is exceptional writing that goes well beyond minimum expectations for the assignment.

B writing is solid writing that exceeds minimum expectations for the assignment.

C writing is average writing that meets the minimum expectations for the assignment.

D writing is below average writing that does not meet the minimum expectations for the assignment.

F writing fails to address the needs of the assignment.

Please note that individual rubrics will be distributed for each assignment.

Tentative Daily Agenda

Note: This agenda is subject to change.

Additional Note: Models for Writers is abbreviated MW. When you read a selection from Models for Writers, you are responsible for not only the reading, but also all front-matter (including “Reflecting What You Know”) and “Thinking Critically about This Readings.” You are NOT responsible for reading “Questions for Study and Discussion” (we’ll address these in class), “Classroom Activity Using Illustration” (we’ll also address this in class), and “Suggested Writing Assignments.”

Week One

August 26

- Introductions
- Syllabus
- Short Writing Activity
- Assign Diagnostic (Due August 28)
 - One page: Discuss your experience with Millikin's first week.

Assignments for August 28th

- **Write your one-page essay discussing Millikin's "First Week"**
- **Read PDF on "Brain Teasers," available on Moodle**

August 28

- Introduce first writing assignment
- Brief Narrative Activity
- Brainstorming Activity
- Sign-up for "Get to Know You" Conferences

Assignments for September 2

- **Read MW 283-287 ("Diction and Tone"), 294-299 ("Me Talk Pretty One Day"), and 372-383 ("Narration" and assorted reading selections)**
- **Try to solidify your topic for the first writing assignment**

Week Two

September 2

- Discuss Reading(s)
- Brief Narrative Activity

Assignments for September 4

- **Read MW 400-406 ("Description") and 412-422 ("Yarn" and "The Taj Mahal")**
- **Bring a laptop or pencil/paper to class and be ready to work on a draft of your personal narrative**

September 4

- Discuss Reading(s)
- In-Class Writing

Assignment for September 9

- **Finish a draft of your personal narrative. Bring three copies (print) of this to class on Tuesday.**

Week Three

September 9

- Peer Review

Assignment for September 11

- **Finish a draft of your personal narrative. A final version is due on Thursday.**
- **Read MW 43-52 and 57-59 ("From Reading to Writing")**

September 11

- Narrative Due
- Introduce Second Writing Assignment
- Critical Reading/Annotation

Assignment for September 13

- Read *MW 483-487* (“Comparison and Contrast”) and *493-502* (“Two Ways to Belong in America” and “That Lean and Hungry Look”)
- Read “Shitty First Drafts,” available on Moodle
- Do some brainstorming using some of the strategies discussed earlier this semester. Be ready to talk about a couple of your ideas in class next week.

Week Four

September 16

- Discuss Readings
- Drafting strategies
- In-class writing

Assignment for September 18

- *MW 81-87* (“Thesis”) and *505-516* (“Who Says a Woman Can’t Be Einstein?”)

September 18

- Discuss Reading
- Designing thesis statements
- Audience Awareness Activities

Assignment for September 23

- *MW 99-108* (“Unity” and assorted reading selections), *172-175* (“Paragraphs”) and *183-187* (“I Just Wanna Be Average”)

Week Five

September 23

- Discuss Readings
- Paragraphing and unity
- Organizational Strategies

Assignment for September 25

- Read *MW 217-226* (“Effective Sentences”) and *233-235* (“Volar”)
- Bring a draft of your compare/contrast to class for in-class workshop

September 25

- Discuss Readings
- In-Class Workshop: Sentence Variation

Assignment for September 30

- Bring a complete draft of your compare/contrast to class for peer review. Bring three copies.

Week Six

September 30

- Peer Review

Assignment for October 2

- Finish your compare/contrast. The final version is due on Thursday.
- Read *MW 517-520* (“Cause and Effect”) and *524-530* (“Why We Crave Horror Movies?”)

October 2

- Compare/Contrast Due

- Distribute Speculating about causes
- Discuss Reading
- Identifying trends and phenomena

Assignment for October 7

- **Brainstorm ideas for your speculating about causes essay. Be ready to workshop those ideas in class.**

Week Seven

October 7

- Topic selection workshop
- Reverse-outline sample speculating about causes essay
- Audience selection

Assignment for October 9

- **Read MW 145-150 (“Beginnings and Endings”) and 535-538 (“Stuck on the Couch”)**

October 9

- Discuss Introductions
- Examine sample introductions
- Workshop: writing an introduction

Assignment for October 14

- **Read MW 151-153 (“Endings”) and 521-523 (“The Famine of Bengal”)**

Week Eight

October 14

- Discuss conclusions
- Examine sample conclusions
- Conclusion workshop

Assignment for October 16

- **Bring your *Pocket Style Manual* to class on Thursday**
- **Keep working on your speculating about causes essay and bring a work in progress to class on Thursday**

October 16

- Mechanics: tightening your writing

Assignment for October 21

- **Bring a complete draft of your speculating about causes to class for peer review. Bring three copies.**

Week Nine

October 21

- Peer Review

Assignment for October 23

- **Finish your compare/contrast. The final version is due on Thursday.**

October 23

- Speculating about causes due
- Short argument Essay distributed

- Introduction to argument
- Assignment for October 26**
- Read *MW* 539-551 (“Argument” and assorted readings)

Week Ten

October 26

- Discussion of sample arguments
- Organization

Assignment for October 30

- Read *MW* 119-123 (“Organization”) and 553-568 (“I Have a Dream,” “What Pro Sports Owners Owe Us,” and “In Praise of the F Word”)

October 30

- Library Day!

Assignment for November 4

- Read *MW* 587-608 (Assorted argument readings)

Week Eleven

November 4

- No Class—Advising Day

Assignment for November 6

- Read *MW* 193-196 (“Transitions”) and 208-214 (“The Magic of the Family Meal”)

November 6

- Discussion of Readings
- Counter-argument
- Transitions
- In-class writing

Assignment for November 11

- **Complete a draft of your short argument for Tuesday. Bring three copies for Peer Review.**

Week Twelve

November 11

- Peer review

Assignment for November 13

- **Finish your short argument essay. The final version is due on Thursday.**

November 13

- Short Argument Due
- Introduce Vetting a *Wikipedia* page

Assignment for November 18

- Read *MW* 644-655 (Finding and using sources)
- Read *Pocket Style Manual* 94-99 (Evaluating sources)
- Bring *Pocket Style Manual* to every class from here on out

Week Thirteen

November 18

- Credible sources
- Background on *Wikipedia*

Assignment for November 20

- **We meet in the library next class period**

November 20

- Library Day

Week Fourteen

November 25

- MLA

Assignment for Thanksgiving Break

- **Work on your project; a draft will be peer reviewed when we return. As always, bring three copies for peer review.**

No Class November 27 [Thanksgiving]

Week Fifteen

December 2

- In-class workshop
- Peer Review

Assignment for December 4

- **Be ready to turn in your *Wikipedia* project**
- **Read “Revising” PDF on Moodle**

December 4

- Vetting a *Wikipedia* Page Project Due
- Revision strategies

Assignment for December 9

- **Read MW 444-450 (“Definition”) and PDF on Reflection**

Week Sixteen

December 9

- “What is good writing?”
- Definitions and Reflection

December 11

- No class: conferences with Kirchoff [December 10, 11, and 12]

Finals Week

December 15-19

- Portfolios Due Final Period

The Personal Narrative
Due September 11th
2+ pages
10% of Final Grade

A personal narrative is a powerful rhetorical text. It affords writers the opportunity to recount a memory—or memories—to an audience beyond you. It allows you to consider ways that your experience(s) might impact other individuals. As we have already discovered in class, a personal narrative can serve many purposes and can be directed at a wide range of audiences. It is up to you to decide how you want your story or stories to affect your readers—and it is also up to you to select an audience that will be interested and invested in your tales.

Your task is to write a short personal narrative about an event in your life that will engage a specific group of readers (that you will choose). To that end, I invite you to respond to one of the following prompts:

1. Describe either your best or worst writing experience from high school. What made this your best/worst writing experience? What did you learn from this experience? How can this be applied to the writing that you do not only in this class, but other courses here at Millikin?
2. Recount your proudest scholastic achievement. What made this a memorable moment? What did you learn from this moment? How has it influenced the person you are now?

If these prompts don't appeal to you, there is no need to panic. I would encourage you to think of milestones, hurdles overcome (or not overcome), influential individuals in your life, and/or profound happenstances that you've encountered in your life. Truthfully, everyone's lives are filled with powerful, important anecdotes that will appeal to a wide range of individuals. Your task is to take one of these moments and recount it in a meaningful way to a specific audience. However, if you do choose to craft a narrative that does not respond to one of the provided prompts, you are required to "approve" the topic with me; I will not read essays that have not had topics approved.

Compare and Contrast
Due October 2nd
3+ pages
10% of Final Grade

Whether informally or formally, we are constantly comparing and contrasting events, things, people, and places in our daily lives. For example, after I eat a hamburger at a restaurant, I compare and contrast it to other hamburgers I've consumed at other restaurants. I take into account several factors—taste, presentation, price, context, and so forth—before using my comparisons to make some sort of evaluative statement about the hamburger I've devoured.

This essay asks you to sincerely and formally take up the genre of compare/contrast. Specifically, I want you to respond to the following prompts:

1. You are attending Millikin to pursue a very specific line of study—for example music business or nursing. For this essay, I want you to compare/contrast your chosen major/minor at Millikin with one other, comparable four-year institution. For example, I was a creative writing major. I might compare/contrast Millikin's Creative Writing program with DePaul University's Creative Writing Program. Note: if you have not yet selected a field of study, that's ok. Pick one that you are considering.
2. Once you've crafted some comparisons, pose some sort of evaluative statement about the programs—what are the strengths of Millikin's program? The weaknesses? Who might be interested in Millikin's program? Who would be interested in the other program you examined?

Some Considerations

→ The key with this essay is determining an appropriate audience. There are several individuals who might be interested in this kind of writing—incoming college freshman, prospective Millikin students, administrators at these institutions, and so forth. Your goal will be to pick one, specific group of people to write for and tailor your compare/contrast appropriately.

→ Another key will be determining what you want to compare/contrast. Will you look at curriculum? Faculty? Cost? Location? Job placement? For this project, you should probably take a detailed look at a minimum of three different factors.

→ You've obviously chosen Millikin; this essay asks you to articulate why you've chosen Millikin. However, that does not mean you should put down any other institution. Rather, please seriously consider what the strengths are of the other program you're investigating and who might be interested in such a program. Moreover, please do seriously consider any weaknesses you think Millikin might have. In short, try to avoid outright biased writing.

Speculating about Causes (or Cause and Effect)

Due October 23rd

3+ pages

10% if Final Grade

Our third essay asks you to be a kind of detective, as you are going to brainstorm, investigate, and articulate why a certain trend is occurring in our society. We'll spend some time talking about what a trend is, of course, but to get you thinking, let me provide one example. Someone might establish people's fascination with reality singing competitions (e.g. *The Voice*, *American Idol*, *Rising Star*); after establishing the *trend* of people being interested in these shows, you would then *speculate* about *why* so many people are taken with this kind of programming.

Here are the particulars of this assignment:

- Establish that your trend is, indeed, a trend. That is, prove to the reader that what you are analyzing is indeed unique. For instance, people wearing clothes is not a trend—it has been established for some time that the majority of people wear clothes. However, there may be a particular trend within clothing/fashion that might merit some speculation. Likewise, indicating that football is a popular sport is not news. But the popularity of fantasy football is a recent development and one that might merit further investigation.
- After you've established your trend, begin speculating about why that trend exists. To that end, provide at least three, well-developed, reasonable hypotheses that articulate why your trend is taking place.

Some things to consider:

- As always, be sure to remember your audience. Think of a group that will be interested in your topic and tailor your information to that specific group.
- Your thesis will set the tone. As such, be sure that your thesis not only includes your trend or phenomena, but also what your three possible reasons for that trend are.
- Develop your reasons/causes. This should be the focus of your essay. Establishing the trend should take no more than one paragraph. Fleshing out the causes is what I'm mainly interested in,
- You may need to do a bit of research to establish your trend. If you do include outside research—which is strongly encouraged—be sure to cite any outside material.

The Short Researched Argument
Due November 13th
3+ pages
15% of Final Grade

Argument is one of the most pervasive forms of communication today. In fact, one noted scholar has tried making the assertion that *everything*—from the shoes you wear to the covers of your books—is a kind of argument. Whether or not you agree with that bold claim, this essay will give you the opportunity to demonstrate your argumentation skills.

For the purposes of this piece, I am asking you to select a topic of local, immediate importance to you. That is, find an issue in your local community—whether that community is Millikin, Decatur, or your hometown—that you feel passionately about and feel compelled to argue (for or against). Brainstorming is going to be an important part of having success with this project, but to give you an idea of what I mean by “local,” here are a few examples of what students have done in the past:

Local to Millikin→ Investing in improving the athletic facilities is mismanaging campus funds; such money should instead go towards improving academic facilities, such as the library.

Local to Decatur→ The city of Decatur needs to put forth an aggressive incentive package to keep ADM headquarters housed here; to lose ADM corporate would be catastrophic for the economy and quality of living in our city.

Local to a Hometown→ The city of Bowling Green, OH needs to incorporate better bike-paths so that bikers are not competing with pedestrians and cars and endangering themselves or others.

In order to be successful with this project, you will need to provide support for your argument. I am asking you to incorporate at least three sources—properly cited—that will enhance your argument. You will also want to practice exemplary argumentation skills, including acknowledging the counter-argument, which we will talk about in class. Additionally, we will discuss finding sources, incorporating sources, and argumentation in class.

Vetting a *Wikipedia* Entry
Due December 4th
15% of Final Grade

When performing a Google search, it is not surprising to have a *Wikipedia* entry surface as one of the top ten hits. Moreover, in my experience as a first-year writing instructor, *Wikipedia* is a popular go-to website for students to use as a resource. Despite its popularity among the masses, academics have been reluctant to have *Wikipedia* count as an “academic” source for a variety of reasons, including reliability and credibility. This assignment asks you to collaboratively investigate the merit of a *Wikipedia* entry/page.

This is a fairly complex assignment, so let’s dive right into the particulars:

1. This is a collaborative project. In groups of two or three, you will select a *Wikipedia* page that you want to “vet.” “Vetting” entails an in-depth, close, careful analysis of a particular idea, topic, or text.
2. Your groups will need to be approved by Kirchoff.
3. Similarly, the *Wikipedia* page you wish to vet will need to be approved by Kirchoff. By the end of today, you should have your groups and a page in mind.
4. First, you will want to verify the information provided in the *Wikipedia* entry through the use of reliable, credible sources. In your write-up, you will formally disclose how you investigated the information, providing complete, MLA works-cited entries for the sources you used to verify the *Wikipedia* page. Make note of any discrepancies you found.
5. Next, you will need to look at each source provided in the *Wikipedia* page. Each entry has a list of sources that were used to craft the content of the page; examine each and every one to determine if they were reliable or not. In your write-up, you will again need to provide a full works-cited entry for each source used, accompanied by a short write-up of why the source is or is not credible.
6. Lastly, if you find any incorrect or incomplete information—or information presented in a poor, underdeveloped manner—you will need to correct that information on the *Wikipedia* page itself. I can help you with this, as we will briefly talk about how to make edits to a *Wikipedia* page. Be sure to note how you did this in your write-up.
7. Separate from the write-up—and separate from your group—I want each individual to write a short one to two page reflection that answers this simple question: What did you learn about *Wikipedia* from this project?

Final Portfolio
Due Finals Week
20% of your Final Grade

We've made it to the end of the semester, which is an excellent time for us to reflect on how we've changed as writers; moreover, this gives you an opportunity to re-consider what academic, polished writing is. To help facilitate this reflection, your final project requires you to put together a portfolio of your best writing. Here are some specifics:

1. You've turned in five written assignments this semester. Select the three assignments that you believe represent your best work of the semester. Don't simply go off of your grades: take a look at my comments, peer review comments, and so forth to help you determine which pieces best represent your writing prowess.
2. Then, you need to revise all three pieces. By "revision" I don't mean changing a line here or there. Rather, I want you to re-conceive these pieces using the comments from peers and from me. Consider writing a new introduction using skills that you've learned throughout the semester. Perhaps you can integrate stronger transitions from paragraph to paragraph. Speaking of paragraphs, maybe you'll find that you have a couple underdeveloped paragraphs in a particular assignment; revise them to make them stronger and more related to your thesis. Or maybe you want to incorporate research into a piece that previously had no research. Simply put—using comments and feedback you've received this semester, substantially revise three of your pieces.
3. Next, you'll craft a brand new composition for your portfolio—a two page essay that addresses two questions. First, you'll define what "good academic" writing is, using conversations we've had as a class. Second, you'll discuss how the pieces you've submitted in your portfolio demonstrate "good academic" writing. You may also address how you've changed/grown as a writer and how your revisions demonstrate this growth.

During our finals' period, this is what you'll need to turn in to me:

- Hard copies of your revised essays
- Hard copies of your original essays (complete with my remarks)
- A hard copy your original two-page reflection discussing "good academic" writing
- An electronic version of your original two-page reflection, uploaded to Moodle. I will show you where to do this in class.

Place all of the hard copies in a sturdy, two-sided pocketed folder. Be sure to write your name on the front of your folder. Please organize your portfolio in a logical manner. To that end, collate your essays (e.g. Revised Essay 1 stapled to Original Essay 1 with comments).

Lastly, a reminder that the only way I will read your final portfolio is if you have turned in all of your essays on time. To that end, you *must* turn in the version that I have commented on.