

# Digital Portfolio & Reflective Argument

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## **Project Overview**

For the final project in this course, you will reflect on and revise the work you've done over the course of the semester in order to come to a fuller understanding of the concept of digital literacy and demonstrate that understanding to the instructor. This project is made up of three major elements.



- 1) **Reflective Argument Essay** – An essay that makes a claim about how your understanding of digital literacy has changed or expanded over the course of the semester, using the course readings, evidence from your own class work, and at least 2 outside sources for support and development.
- 2) **Substantial Revision of Project 1** – You will revise the Rhetorical Analysis Project using my feedback, and write a cover letter that details your revision process.
- 3) **Digital Portfolio** – Your final Wordpress site will house the major projects you've done for the course and your reading responses (blog), but you'll also create an Introductory page that includes a biographical section and forecast of the major contents of the portfolio.

## **Reflective Argument Essay**

The Reflective Argument Essay is a chance for you to propose an answer to some of the questions we've been exploring all semester—What is digital literacy and how does one acquire and practice it? How do new technologies shape our sense of literacy? How do new communication and writing tools change literacy? In short, what does it mean to be “literate” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Fortunately, you should be well prepared to answer these questions. Our textbook offers a number of definitions of digital literacy. We've also examined these questions in major assignments, blog posts, and class discussions. Your task for this part of Project 4 will be to review and reflect on all of this in order to come up with your own argument concerning how we should understand “digital literacy.” To support this argument, you'll draw from you're your experiences, course readings, and assignments, but you'll also be expected to do some outside research as well. Your finished piece will be between 1500-1800

words, will include a Works Cited or References section, and will be housed on a new page in your Wordpress portfolio.

### ***Substantial Revision of Project 1***

For this component of Project 4, you will review my feedback on your Rhetorical Analysis Essay and make substantive changes to your essay that address all of my concerns, improving your essay in the process. As you make revisions, keep track of what you're doing in another document. Then write a 1-2 p. letter to me in which you discuss 1) how you understand my original feedback, 2) what changes you made to address that feedback, and 3) how the essay is improved as a result. You will replace your existing Project 1 on Wordpress with your newly revised essay, and e-mail me the cover letter as Word .doc.

### ***Digital Portfolio***

For the digital portfolio, you'll work on your already existing wordpress blog to add pages and finalize its design. The finish product will include a page for each of your major projects: rhetorical analysis, found essay, group hacktivist project, and the literacy argument, as well as your blog and an introductory page. We will work on putting this together in class.

### ***Important Dates***

- 4/1 - Introduce assignment; Research databases overview and practice
- 4/3 – Review Framing/Quoting; Share Sources for Reflective Argument
- 4/8 – Review literacy readings (Jones and Hafner); Reflective Argument Organization, Work on Essay Outlines
- 4/10 – Thesis Workshop; Building the Portfolio
- 4/15, 4/17, 4/22 – Individual Conferences
- Due between 3/28 and 3/30
- 4/24 Reflective Argument Workshop/Peer Review; Work on Digital Portfolios and Revisions

### ***Requirements***

- Reflective Argument: 1500-1800 words
- Project 1 Revision Cover Letter: 400-600 words
- Wordpress Portfolio: Contains 6 pages— Introduction, page for each project, and blog.

### ***Evaluation Criteria***

Reflective Argument

- Reflect on and explicitly articulate a more complex understanding of digital literacy and writing.
- Contextualize your points within the conversations among the course text and other outside research.
- Use course readings, outside research, and your experiences with projects to generate a claim and to demonstrate and support your points.
- An essay that meets all of the technical requirements of the assignment: 1500-1800 words in length, and that follows the conventions of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and appropriate documentation/citation and professional formatting

### Revision

- Revision demonstrates substantial changes from the last to the most recent version. Changes should go beyond local “editing” to include structural/global revisions.
- Revision is accompanied by a cover letter (600-900) words that carefully documents your process and how the piece has improved.

### Portfolio

- A final portfolio containing all of the pages noted above.
- Attention to multimodal design, the relationship between text and image, and presentation.
- Portfolio is carefully proofread, and free of superficial, sentence-level grammatical errors.

### **Assessment**

The final portfolio is an opportunity for you to show off the work you've done all semester as well as to reflect on what you've learned. This portfolio is also a way for me, as instructor, to make a decision about whether your work in this course has earned the final grade “bump,” raising your final grade by one full letter. When making this decision, I look at all of the work you've produced for the portfolio as well as your reflective argument essay. Accordingly, my decision to raise your grade will be a holistic one that takes into consideration how well you've met criteria for each project and your overall engagement in the course.

### **Resources**

- For the Reflective Argument: Multiple Chapters in UDL; but you might find it particularly useful to refer back to a section in Chapter 1- “What Are

Digital Literacies?" (12-15) as well as the afterword in the book "Mediated Me 2.0 (190-191). Chapter 7 on Critical Literacy might be worth reviewing as well. UDL also has a great list of sources in their own References section. Here's a selection of some of the best stuff on literacy:

Alvermann, Donna E. *Adolescents and Literacies in a Digital World*. Peter Lang, 2002. 19-39.

Coiro, Julie, Knobel, Michele, Lankshear, Colin and Donald J. Leu. *Handbook of Research on New Literacies*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum. 2008.

James Paul Gee and Elizabeth R. Hayes. *Language and Learning in the Digital Age*. New York: Routledge. 2011.

Jewitt, Carey. "Multimodality, 'Reading', and 'Writing' for the 21st Century." *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 26.3 (2005): 315-31.

Kress, Gunther. R. *Literacy in the New Media Age*. London: Routledge, 2003.

Lankshear, Colin and Michele Knobel. *New Literacies: Everyday Practices and Classroom Learning*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 2006.

- My office hours are from 10:00-12:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but I can also be available by appointment if those times don't work for you. I'm more than happy to meet with you to discuss any issues you are having with your project .In addition, I will answer any questions emailed before 8pm that day (with a few exceptions, such as when I am travelling for conferences), and often within an hour or so. I'm here to facilitate your success and welcome your questions and concerns.
- The Writing Center can help with any issues you are having if you prefer to work with them or if you need additional help. They are a great resource, and I have never had a student paper that didn't go up at least a letter grade after working with the peer tutors there. It's best, though, to visit the Writing Center with specific questions or with my feedback on your paper so that they can give you targeted help.