

Challenging Students in a Professional Writing Classroom to Engage Critically in Stakeholder Analysis: A 2014-2015 Lesson Study by Ryan Friesen, Bryan Kopp, and Marie Moeller

Simulated Form (front)

UES University of Eastern State

DFA 9/E / ?
Bookstore _____
Receipt _____

EMERGENCY BOOK LOAN Request Form

Student Name: Sam Green Student ID: 06661121

Circle: FR SO UR SR Number of Credits: 12 Major/College: Bio/Yes

Ethnicity (circle): Asian American Indian/Alaskan Native Black/African-American
Hispanic/Latino Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander Other Race
White Prefer Not to Answer

Do you receive Financial Aid? (Circle) YES NO Amount/Type: _____

Parental Income Level (circle): 0-19,999 20,000-29,999 30,000-39,999
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER 40,000-69,999 70,000-89,999 90,000+

List Required Books for which you are requesting this EMERGENCY LOAN:

Book Title/Author: ISBN: COURSE #:

Supplies for "Intro to Art"—Special pens/erasers/stuff PAINT ART 101

Software (Graphing/Calculation) for Chemistry CHEM 115

\$267.00

A small number of EMERGENCY Book Loans are available to students based on demonstrated need.
Complete all parts of the form. Non-completed forms will not be processed.

Simulated Form (back)

I understand the loan is based on NEED, but I don't get financial aid (my parents make too much money) and I don't know how to show I have "NEED".

The money isn't for books (all my books are from Textbook Loans) but for Art supplies I didn't expect for Intro to Art. Also we have to buy an app for chemistry that I didn't expect it to be so expensive.

I've tried to get a loan from my parents, but they said that all my books are suppose to be loans so they don't believe I need to buy the things for Art and chem. I don't know what to do because we have to take these gen ed art classes and then they are so expensive that I need to have hundreds of dollars for this?!

Goals for the Activity

Offer students an opportunity to:

1. Engage thoughtfully and critically in a stakeholder analysis activity.
2. Confront the complexity of responding in writing, post-stakeholder analysis, vis-à-vis dialogue with their group members.
3. Use varying concepts and theoretical understanding of professional writing in undertaking, analyzing, and responding to a professional writing problem.

Lesson Plan

- Prior to this lesson, students had been discussing the moment in the history of professional writing when the field was turning to the social and the ethical implications of its work.
- Students had read a piece by Steven B. Katz* regarding the use of rhetoric in the Holocaust; Katz articulates how professional writing can be seen as a commitment of the time in which it is generated, as well as a vehicle that can drive commitments.
- With that background, students were placed into three small groups—one representing students, one representing faculty, and one representing administrators—and told to engage with, negotiate about, and respond to a simulated form (left) using a set of analysis prompts (right).

* Katz, Steven B. "Ethic of Expediency: Classical Rhetoric, Technology, and The Holocaust." *College English* 54:3, 1992. 255-275.

Major Findings

- Students engaged with the form intellectually and responded to it from multiple perspectives.
- It was clearly easier for them to identify with the institutional role they were given than it was for them to orientate themselves to the broader context of the form's ethical implications.

- Instead, they readily took on the institution's role, despite having read the Katz article and discussed the difficulty of stepping outside institutional bounds to consider all aspects of a situation, including their own place and potential to change an institution rather than simply acting as its agents.

Small Group Writing Prompts

Step I

Consider this form, and the student's responses to it. Analyze the form: what information does it ask for, how clearly and appropriately are the questions articulated, and does the requested information seem relevant to the purpose for which it was created?

Analyze the student responses: does s/he supply responses relevant to what the question seems to be asking? Are any responses relevant to the *purpose* for the form, if not to the questions themselves? Is the student's claim, request, or intention clear?

Writing A: In your own words, provide a brief interpretation of the purpose and intended use of the form, and the student's thesis.

Step II

You are [*Insert the role the student will be enacting*].

You have been given the form submitted by the student as you see it, and you have been told to review this form and [*a memo the content of which depends on the role the student is given*].

Take time to consider your obligations as a [*Insert the role the student will be enacting*]: what criteria for decision---making might you apply as you determine how to respond?

Writing B: Make a decision about [*depends on the role s/he is given*], state your decision, and explain your rationale for that decision. Your audience for this rationale might be your peers or your colleagues.

Step III

Complete the task you were given in Step II.

Writing C: Compose a formal memo in response to the task your employer has given you, with attention to the expectations of that audience as you understand it.

Writing D: Briefly reflect upon and describe what you found challenging about writing this memo. Your audience for this reflection might be your peers or your colleagues.