

UGS 303 Creative Problem Solving
TERM PROJECT

ASSIGNMENT: Process Journal

Due Date: *Ongoing, see TA section calendar*

Summary: A process journal is a tool you will use to keep track of your ideas as you work on finding solutions to your problem.

Objective: Maintain one go-to place to collect your thoughts that allows for uncensored flow of ideas, notes, etc. Through regular entries, this journal will help you develop an internal dialogue about your problem solving process that you can refer back to over the course of the semester.

Guidelines: Your journal can include anything related to your problem that helps you approach your problem in a more creative way.

Format:

A notebook that is dedicated to your problem solving process. Any size works, so long as it does not contain notes for any other courses or lectures and will stay intact for the course of the semester.

Number of entries:

On average you will need to complete at least 3 entries per week, so start now! Be sure to date them, as well. (Points will be docked if it is clear that you filled pages the night before it is due.)

Possible entries:

Random thoughts and ideas on your topic
Notes on research sources
Lists / To-dos / Outlines
Sketches
Diagrams
Insights from discussion section activities
Ideas for your pecha kucha presentation
Ideas for your final report

Most importantly: Be creative! Don't censor yourself! Let your thoughts flow!

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ASSIGNMENT: Project Proposal

Due Date: *Early in the semester, see TA section calendar*

Summary: The proposal is the first step in a semester-long process that culminates in a 3-4 page creative problem solving project. It involves identifying one or two potential projects, and describing the who / what / where / when / and why for each.

Objective: 'Ideation' is defined as the formation of ideas or concepts. Successful ideation requires an open and active mind. The Proposal assignment is meant to kick-start your final project. Ideation requires focus. It means coming up with more than a title. The idea or concept must be coherent enough to stick and then incubate. This will likely require targeted (but brief) research.

Guidelines: In no more than one page, describe an idea (or two) that could become your final project. Your description should address the 5 Ws (see the Summary above), and it may do so in any format you deem appropriate. This is not a formal draft, and your description does not need to be in paragraph format. Tables, bullets, or other formats are acceptable, so long as the content is clearly written and communicates effectively. Be sure to include sources, if you use any.

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ASSIGNMENT: Bibliography

Due Date: *Mid-semester, see TA section calendar*

Summary: You will begin researching your term project problem by locating a minimum of the (5) sources listed below. You are highly encouraged to find more than the minimum amount of sources.

Objective: The bibliography should not be viewed just as an exercise in avoiding plagiarism, you should really think of it as a fact-finding mission that will prime the pump of your creative genius. One of the crucial first steps in any problem solving exercise is to gather a wide range of resources that you can use to tackle complex problems. These resources will not only help you solve the problem, but will help you to better understand the problem itself. The evidence that you gather here will be the foundation of the argument you make later in the semester. The bibliography also helps to situate the work you produce in the larger academic discourse.

The Four Step Process from the "(8) Characteristics of Creative People:"

1. *Preparation*
2. Incubation
3. Illumination
4. Verification or Review

Guidelines: You will need to come up with the following sources:

(2) Books- Write a few sentences describing how these sources are applicable to your project.

(1) Article from an academic journal- Write a few sentences describing how these sources are applicable to your project.

(1) Interview with someone who has knowledge about your project topic. There should be a minimum of 5 relevant questions asked and responded to. Include a transcript of the interview in your write-up.

Pick (1) of the following and write up a few sentences about the information you gained from it:

- Video about your topic (Could be a TED Talk, or from a documentary)
- News article about your topic
- Website or blog about your topic
- _____? Another source that isn't listed that you think is relevant to your information finding mission

Resources:

NoodleBib: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/noodlebib>

Easybib: <http://www.easybib.com/>

Academic Journals: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/students/find/findarticles.html>

General Research Help: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/students/>

You must cite your sources using the MLA format!

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ASSIGNMENT: Final Project Report

Due Date: *End of semester, see TA section calendar*

Summary: You have spent the semester working to solve a problem that you have identified in your life or the world around you. This research project required identifying a problem, brainstorming and mulling over possible solutions, testing the solutions, and evaluating their efficacy to determine which were most appropriate.

Objective: In this short paper, you will need to justify your methods and analyze your results in the context of the variables you have chosen. Be sure to address all of the following topics:

- How has your Problem evolved? How has your understanding of your chosen Problem evolved over the course of the semester? Which insights caused you to change the scope, direction or definition of your project?
- Which interventions or solutions did you attempt this semester? What are the quantitative and qualitative metrics that you collected over the semester? How did you attempt to solve your problem?
- Analyze the results of this project: Did you accomplish the goals you set out at the beginning of the semester? What would you change about your process if you were to continue with the project?

Format: Writing a good paper requires planning, researching, thoughtful writing, and revision. This paper should demonstrate the knowledge you have gained researching this particular problem as well as your ability to express your thoughts and ideas. It will be essential to take time to create a well-structured paper and to correct basic grammatical and syntax errors. For this assignment, please format your paper to use 11-point font, double spacing, and normal margins. The paper should be at least 2 pages of text followed by any supporting material that you are using to make your case.

Be sure to cite all ideas that are not your own. Properly cite any quotes or data that you use according to the MLA format.

Bibliography: You have already created a bibliography during the semester. For this assignment, you only need to list the sources you used for key ideas or sources of data. You don't need to annotate this updated bibliography, but be sure to use the MLA format again.

Resources: Undergraduate Writing Center

Late Policy: Any paper turned in after the original due date and time for your discussion section will be lowered one full letter grade. For each subsequent week the paper is late, it will be lowered an additional letter grade. *No papers will be accepted after May 8th at 5pm.*