

ACTS OF *definition*

(dʒfɪˈnɪʃən)

1. The setting of bounds or limits; limitation, restriction. *Obs. rare.*
2. The action of determining a controversy or question at issue; determination, decision; *spec.* a formal decision or pronouncement of an ecclesiastical authority. *Obs. exc. in specific use.*
3. *Logic, etc.* The action of defining, or stating exactly what a thing is, or what a word means.
- 4.a. A precise statement of the essential nature of a thing; a statement or form of words by which anything is defined.

Class Basics...

Meeting Time: MTWR 1.10-2.10

Meeting Place: Social Work Building B010

Website: <https://catalysttools.washington.edu/workspace/russellr/14243/>

Instructor: Lindsay Rose Russell

Email Address: russellr@u.washington.edu

Office Hour Basics...

Meeting Time: TR 2.30-3.30

Meeting Place: Parnassus Café if cloudy and cold or Art Courtyard if sunny and warm

Actual Office: Art347

Virtual Office: LindsayKnows@gmail.com
(on Gmail Chat)

description (dɪˈskrɪpʃən)

This is a course about writing.

You may have read the above sentence and felt distinctly unenticed. Just when you were all aglow with the first blushes of summertime, you're dragged into a windowless classroom to take a required course with an inscrutable title (um, "composition : exposition"!?) and asked to do lots and lots of writing, which activity—love it or hate it—is a huge pain in the ass. You may, in short, have been skeptical of this class before you even signed up for it; and after that first sentence on the syllabus, you might be even more so now.

But here's the thing about skepticism: It's welcome in this class. Skeptics are good at airing doubts, asking questions, and debating what is or can be accepted as knowledge. These are the selfsame qualities that make for good researchers and good writers. Knowledge—both within and beyond the academy—is built on doubts, questions, and debates. So hold onto your skepticism; you'll need it.

But you'll also need a dose of faith. The best writers don't simply trust in themselves to produce witty and engaging words, they trust in others to inspire, to interpret, and to extend those words. They have to believe there's someone out there reading who can and should *do something* with what's been written.

So for the next few weeks, let's mimic the Seattle skies by adopting a sometimes-stormy, sometimes-sunny disposition. Let's write in order to rain on people's parades, to clear up cloudy confusions, to sprinkle the world with a few new ideas, and to illuminate new purposes for old ones. Let's bask in this opportunity to agonize over our writing because it is precisely the writing that we agonize over—the writing that we *weather*—that we're most likely to learn something from, most interested in returning to later, and most proud of in the end.

texts (tɛkstz)

Over the next few weeks, I'm asking you to focus on what I'm calling "acts of definition": You'll be asked to create and recreate a working definition of what writing is, does, and looks like; you'll be asked to figure out what bounds, limits, and restrictions are placed on us by other people's definitions, created in and through their writing; you'll be asked to define the points of difference and controversy within and across texts, including your own.

Accordingly, the primary texts of this course will be your own writing. But we'll use select chapters from a writing guide to help generate reading, researching, and writing strategies; we'll read from a selection of dictionaries, actual and virtual, to *practice* reading, researching, and writing strategies; and we'll use a collection of articles, essays, poems, documentaries, and short fiction to refine reading, researching and writing strategies as you create your own personal writing guide.

We are likely to read all of the following this quarter:

- Selections from *Acts of Inquiry* (forthcoming)
- Malcolm X, "Discovering the Power of Language" (1964)
- Beverly Gross, "Bitch" (1994)
- James W. Loewen, "Handicapped by History: The Process of Hero-Making" (1995)
- Wallace Stevens, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (1917)
- Assorted essays, documentaries, and short fiction

All course readings will be available for free on the course website. You are, however, required to print each of them out and bring them with you to class.

materials (mə'tɪriəlz)

- Access to the internet (i.e., UW domains, but also WWW domains)
- Access to the libraries (i.e., UW Net ID, but also physical access)
- Paper (you will be required to print and bring to class all course readings, drafts, and final papers so be prepared for that expense)

assessment (ə'sɛsmənt)

70% portfolio

All of the work you complete during the quarter leads to and culminates in a final portfolio, which will include the following.

compendium

Your portfolio must include a *draft* of every writing assignment completed throughout the quarter. If you missed any assignments, it is your responsibility to make up the work and include it in your portfolio. (Note that if you choose to "showcase"—see below—any missed work, you still need to produce a draft and a revision.) An incomplete portfolio guarantees a failing grade.

showcase

Your portfolio must include a selection of *revised* work that demonstrates your awareness of and competence in implementing the skills you acquired throughout the quarter.

commentary

Your portfolio must include contextualizing commentary that introduces and defends the work included in the portfolio. The commentary is an opportunity to reflect on your own

writing practices as you make an argument for your development and accomplishments over the quarter.

Please be aware that because the portfolio requires you to discuss and defend your ability to revise your work, you will want to keep all drafts of completed assignments as well as revision notes, peer review comments, and responses from me.

30% participation

The expectations for class participation are very high. Ideally, you should do all of the following: Show up for class; show up for class on time; turn in your assignments; turn in your assignments on time; be prepared for class each day by having completed the assigned work; participate in and lead discussions with energy; be respectful of your colleagues by listening to their ideas and responding to their work.

attendance

Class attendance isn't mandatory, but it is nevertheless crucial to your success. In the case of unavoidable absence, you should contact me beforehand and contact your classmates to find out what you missed afterwards. It is up to you to catch yourself up on coursework. I will not provide you with a summary of a class, but if you want to go over what you missed, you are free to come by office hours.

conferences

A few classes will be canceled to allow time for conferences with me. Be aware that even when class is canceled, you are still expected to prepare for and bring work to each conference. As some of you may know from previous courses, conferences tend to be an invaluable time to get more direct attention from your instructor. Those who come most prepared get the most out of conferences.

submission (səb'mɪʃən)

Papers should be submitted on time, at the beginning of the class period they are due. No late work is accepted or given feedback. No email submissions are accepted without prior approval. On peer review days, you may be expected to bring multiple copies of your drafts.

For your reference, most papers in the humanities take this (or a very similar) form:

- 1" margins—note that your computer may default to 1.25" on the left and right side margins and you will need to change this.
- Double-spaced (unless otherwise indicated), Times New Roman 12 pt. font
- Number all pages except for the first page in the top right-hand corner.
- Stapled—not folded or paperclipped
- Single-spaced at the top, left-hand corner of the first page, include your name, your course & section, my name, date, assignment/title.
- Correct MLA citation

accommodation and concern (ə,kəmə,deɪʃən) + (kən'sɜ:n)

Please let me know if you need accommodation of any sort. I'm happy to work with the UW Disability Services Office (dso@u.washington.edu, 206.543.6450/V or 206.543.6452/TTY) to provide what you require and willing to take suggestions specific to this class to meet your needs.

If you have any concerns or complaints about the course or my instruction, please see me as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with me or are not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact Anis Bawarshi, Director of the Expository Writing Program. If, after speaking with the director, you are still not satisfied with the response you receive, you may contact Gary Handwerk, English Department Chair.

plagiarism ('pleɪdʒə,rɪz(ə)m)

Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and counterproductive to the aims of this course, which is about you and your writing. In this class, you are encouraged to refer to the work of other people, for inspiration and support, so quote and cite as liberally as you like but never present someone else's ideas or writing as your own. For the purposes of this course, plagiarism includes all of the following:

- failure to cite sources of ideas
- failure to cite sources of paraphrased material
- failure to cite sources of specific language and/or passages
- submission of someone else's work as your own
- submission of your own work produced for another class

Plagiarized work will not count as submitted, receive feedback, or be eligible for inclusion in the portfolio as a draft or a revised piece of work. Policy requires that any student found to have plagiarized any piece of writing in this class be reported to the College of Arts and Sciences for review—a tedious, humiliating, and overwhelmingly unfun experience. If you are ever uncertain as to how you might appropriately and productively use the work of others, talk to me.

outcomes ('aʊt,kəmz)

The University of Washington Expository Writing Program describes the following goals for all of its 100-level writing courses:

1. To demonstrate an awareness of the strategies that writers use in different writing contexts.

- The writing employs style, tone, and conventions appropriate to the demands of a particular genre and situation.
- The writer is able to demonstrate the ability to write for different audiences and contexts, both within and outside the university classroom.
- The writing has a clear understanding of its audience, and various aspects of the writing (mode of inquiry, content, structure, appeals, tone, sentences, and word choice) address and are strategically pitched to that audience.
- The writer articulates and assesses the effects of his or her writing choices.

2. To read, analyze, and synthesize complex texts and incorporate multiple kinds of evidence purposefully in order to generate and support writing.

- The writing demonstrates an understanding of the course texts as necessary for the purpose at hand.
- Course texts are used in strategic, focused ways (for example: summarized, cited, applied, challenged, re-contextualized) to support the goals of the writing.
- The writing is intertextual, meaning that a "conversation" between texts and ideas is created in support of the writer's goals.
- The writer is able to utilize multiple kinds of evidence gathered from various sources (primary and secondary - for example, library research, interviews, questionnaires, observations, cultural artifacts) in order to support writing goals.
- The writing demonstrates responsible use of the MLA (or other appropriate) system of

documenting sources.

3. To produce complex, analytic, persuasive arguments that matter in academic contexts.

- The argument is appropriately complex, based in a claim that emerges from and explores a line of inquiry.
- The stakes of the argument, why what is being argued matters, are articulated and persuasive.
- The argument involves analysis, which is the close scrutiny and examination of evidence and assumptions in support of a larger set of ideas.
- The argument is persuasive, taking into consideration counterclaims and multiple points of view as it generates its own perspective and position.
- The argument utilizes a clear organizational strategy and effective transitions that develop its line of inquiry.

4. To develop flexible strategies for revising, editing, and proofreading writing.

- The writing demonstrates substantial and successful revision.
- The writing responds to substantive issues raised by the instructor and peers.
- Errors of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics are proofread and edited so as not to interfere with reading and understanding the writing.

calendar ('kæləndə(r))

On the following page is a partially complete calendar for the quarter. Please be aware that this information is provisional and subject to change. You can count on having reading or writing or both due on every day of class. More complete details about assignments will be given at the beginning of each class period; if you are not in class, it is your responsibility to find out about assigned work from your classmates.

other important dates

M	21 June 2010	First Day of Instruction
M	5 July 2010	University Holiday – Independence Day
U	8 August 2010	Last Day to Drop
F	13 August 2010	Last Day to Withdraw
F	20 August 2010	Last Day of Instruction
F	20 August 2010	Portfolio Due (link emailed by 8pm)

	MONDAY 21 June	TUESDAY 2 June	WEDNESDAY 3 June	THURSDAY 4 June
week one	Class: Welcome	Class: Habits and Dictionaries Due: Questions on syllabus, emailed by 6pm Chapter 1	Class: Inquiry Due: Process	Class: Complexity Due: Inquiry
week two	28 June Class: Conversation, Annotation Due: Complexity	29 June Class: Conversation Due: Conversation I	30 June Class: Process Due: Conversation II	1 July Class: Argument Due: Condensation
week three	5 July Class: University Holiday (Independence Day) CLASS CANCELED Due:	6 July Class: Issues and Questions Due: Chapter 8	7 July Class: Due: Issue and Question	8 July Class: Due: Chapter 9
week four	12 July Class: Individual Conferences CLASS CANCELED Due:	13 July Class: Due: Thesis	14 July Class: Claims Due: Chapter 3, Chapter 7	15 July Class: Evidence and Sources Due: Gross Anatomy
week five	19 July Class: Due: Claim Gross	20 July Class: Due: Loewen Anatomy	21 July Class: Support Due: Chapter 7	22 July Class: Due: Claim Loewen
week six	26 July Class: Due:	27 July Class: Due:	28 July Class: Due:	29 July Class: Due:
week seven	2 August Class: Due:	3 August Class: Due:	4 August Class: Due:	5 August Class: Due:
week eight	9 August Class: Revision Due:	10 August Class: Revision Due:	11 August Class: Revision Due:	12 August Class: Revision Party Due:
week nine	16 August Class: Revision w/o Russell! Due:	17 August Class: Revision w/o Russell! Due:	18 August Class: Revision w/o Russell! Due:	19 August Class: Revision w/o Russell! Due:

sequence one

sequence one

sequence one

sequence one

sequence two

sequence two

sequence two

revision week

revision week

Revised Calendar

Acts of definition

English 131 G

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
week one	21 June Class: Welcome	22 June Class: Habits and Dictionaries Due: Questions on syllabus, emailed by 6pm Chapter 1	23 June Class: Inquiry Due: Process	24 June Class: Complexity Due: Inquiry
	28 June Class: Conversation, Annotation Due: Complexity	29 June Class: Conversation Due: Conversation I	30 June Class: Process Due: Conversation II	1 July Class: Argument Due: Condensation
week two	5 July Class: University Holiday (Independence Day) CLASS CANCELED Due:	6 July Class: Issues and Questions Due: Chapter 8	7 July Class: Due: Issue and Question	8 July Class: Due: Chapter 9
	12 July Class: Individual Conferences CLASS CANCELED Due:	13 July Class: Peer Review Due: Thesis	14 July Class: Rhetorical Analysis Due: Chapter 3, Chapter 7	15 July Class: Evidence and Sources Due: Gross Analysis I
week three	19 July Class: Revision Due: Gross Analysis II	20 July Class: Definition in Text Due: Revised Thesis	21 July Class: Documentary Due: Loewen Anatomy	22 July Class: Conversation Due: Gladwell Anatomy
	26 July Class: Conversation Due: Chapter 10 Connection	27 July Class: Terms Due: Synthesis	28 July Class: Terms Due: Term	29 July Class: Individual Conferences CLASS CANCELED Due: Proposal
week four	2 August Class: Due: Research	3 August Class: Revision Due: Chapter 11	4 August Class: Peer Review Due: Paper	5 August Class: Good Writing Due: Paper
	9 August Class: Commentary and Evaluation CLASS IN MGH 076 Due: Chapter 12	10 August Class: Revision Due:	11 August Class: Revision CLASS IN MGH 076 Due: Chapter 13	12 August Class: Revision Party Due:
week five	16 August Class: Revision w/o Russell! CLASS IN MGH 076 Due: Chapter 14	17 August Class: Revision w/o Russell! Due:	18 August Class: Revision w/o Russell! CLASS IN MGH 076 Due: Chapter 16	19 August Class: Revision w/o Russell! Due:

sequence ONE

(ˈsiɪkwəns)

I. Succession, following.

1.a. The fact of following after or succeeding; the following of one thing after another in succession; an instance of this.

b. *in sequence of*: in pursuance or consequence of. *Obs.*

c. *in sequence*: one after another.

2.a. Order of succession.

b. *Gram.* Chiefly *in sequence of tenses*, the manner in which the tense of a subordinate clause depends on that of the principal clause. *Cf.*

process (ˈprɑːsɪs)

W 23 June

(1-2 p ss) Describe the steps of our writing process—not what you think (or know) you *should* do, but what you *do* do. Compare your process to that described in *Acts of Inquiry* p 13-16: Do you follow the steps in the boxes for collecting, drafting, and revising? Why or why not? Which are you interested in trying out this quarter and why?

inquiry (ɪnˈkwaɪəri)

R 24 June

(1-2 p ss) Inquire into a word in the dictionary.

The word: can be one you know well, one you hear all the time but have never known, one you have looked up but seem inherently unable to remember the meaning of, one you just heard, one that strikes your fancy as you browse through actual or virtual pages. In all events, it should be a word you find interesting.

The dictionary: can be one you consult regularly (online, in paper, by mobile device), one that’s “respectable” and “traditional” like *Webster’s* or *American Heritage* or *Random House*; one that’s “less respectable” or “alternative” like *dictionary.com* or *urbandictionary.com*; or one that’s “specialized” or “strange” like *wordnik.com* or *A Feminist Dictionary* or *The Devil’s Dictionary*.

The inquiry: should follow the steps to inquiry described in *Acts of Inquiry* p 5-6: Write down anything about what you observe in the definition that puzzles you or challenges your beliefs and values. Next, write down questions you might have (Do things have to be this way?). Finally, write down other ways you think the word could be defined (Maybe this could happen another way instead.).

complexity (kəmˈplɛksɪtɪ)

M 28 June

(1-2 p) Seek out the complexity of a word in the *OED*.

The word: can be the same as before (so long as it’s in the *OED* and seems to have shifted meaning over time) or different (some specific suggestions for words are below).

The dictionary: must be the *OED*, actual or virtual.

The complexity: should derive from the steps to complexity described in *Acts of Inquiry* p 8-9: Reflect on particular details of the word’s history that are most and least interesting to you and why; imagine how and why definitions from different periods might differ from one other (or why dictionaries with a perspective that *isn’t* historical might differ from this one in particular ways); try to put into words questions that will help you explore why the word has changed in this way (or why a historical definition may be more or less useful than another kind of definition).

The primary aim of your paper should be to describe the history of word by documenting changes in its meaning over time. Your writing should document when shifts occurred and give examples of actual usage to show evolution. In writing your essay, do not simply list a progression of *OED* definitions and quotations, but organize your response around a central idea or theme which you draw from you analysis of the semantic shifts attested in the *OED*. (Some other helpful tips: Don't dwell on historical spelling variation or histories of words before they arrived in English. For words that can be different parts of speech, you may recognize this fact in your paper but focus on one classification of the word—e.g. noun.)

Suggested words:

<i>baffle</i>	<i>dish</i>	<i>glitch</i>	<i>mouse</i>	<i>skim</i>
<i>bologna</i>	<i>dizzy</i>	<i>governor</i>	<i>meat</i>	<i>spam</i>
(<i>baloney?</i>)	<i>dude</i>	<i>harlot</i>	<i>naughty</i>	<i>surf</i>
<i>bullpen</i>	<i>dull</i>	<i>hot</i>	<i>pizza</i>	<i>thug</i>
<i>career</i>	<i>eerie</i>	<i>hunk</i>	<i>pretty</i>	<i>weasel</i>
<i>chick</i>	<i>flirt</i>	<i>jazz</i>	<i>queen</i>	<i>wench</i>
<i>corn</i>	<i>freak</i>	<i>knight</i>	(<i>cf. quean</i>)	<i>whine</i>
<i>cool</i>	<i>gay</i>	<i>lady</i>	<i>quintessential</i>	<i>worm</i>
<i>cram</i>	<i>gentle</i>	<i>lame</i>	<i>quirky</i>	
<i>deer</i>	<i>giddy</i>	<i>libel</i>	<i>queer</i>	
<i>disease</i>	<i>girl</i>	<i>lush</i>	<i>silly</i>	

conversation I (kɒnvə'seɪʃən)

T 29 June

(1-2 p) Put the definition of word in one dictionary into conversation with definitions of the same word in other dictionaries by inquiring into the complexity of defining structures and results.

The word: can be the same as a word you've researched before or it can be different. (You may wish to quickly look into a few words to see which one will be most interesting to explore further.)

The dictionaries: can and should be both "traditional" (*OED*, *Webster's*, *American Heritage*, *Random House*) and "nontraditional" (*urbandictionary.com*, *The Dictionary of American Slang*, *wordnik.com*, *A Feminist Dictionary*, *The Devil's Dictionary*).

The inquiry: consists in consulting 6 different dictionaries.

The complexity: consists in reproducing and annotating definitions from 3 of those dictionaries. Your reproduction can be transcription, screenshot, photograph; and your annotation should follow the steps described in *Acts of Inquiry* p 13-14: Note key features and differences, ask questions, indicate connections.

The conversation: In a few paragraphs (2-4), discuss what you observed about the way dictionaries define, sketching out the similarities and differences between (agreements and disagreements across) your selected definitions. How does each definition respond to the others (in structure, intent, result)?

conversation II (kɒnvə'seɪʃən)

W 30 June

(1-2 p ds) Considering all of the research you have done thus far, describe how your own thinking has changed as a result of engaging in the academic conversation.

The conversation: Follow the steps to joining academic conversation described in *Acts of Inquiry* p 10-12: Describe what listening carefully and emphatically to what others have to say (as well as to how others structure what they have to say) has taught you (about a word, words in general, meanings, meaning making, or dictionaries); discuss how you understand others to have arrived at

their feelings, beliefs, practices (of meaning making); and finally, explore how our own opinions/understandings (about a word, words, meanings, meaning making, and/or dictionaries) have shifted. What personal ideas or opinions have you revisited or revised? Which have been confirmed?

condensation (kɒndən'seɪʃən)

R 1 July

(2 p ds) Exercise your skills of inquiry, complexity, and conversation in a discussion of 2 dictionary prefaces.

The inquiry, complexity, and conversation: Prepare to write by following the steps summarized in *Acts of Inquiry* on p 6, 9, 12, and 14.

The process: Compose your draft by following the steps for drafting provided in *Acts of Inquiry* p 13-15: Reflect on the materials; identify an issue; formulate a question; decide what point you want to make; and make it.

issue + question ('ɪʃ(j)uɪ, 'ɪʃjuɪ) + ('kwɛstʃ(ə)n)

W 7 July

(1-2 p ss) Plan for your next assignment by identifying and clarifying issues that matter to you OR by formulating an issue-based question to explore in the next paper. (See the assignment prompt for *thesis* below.)

The issue: can be explored by taking the 6 steps to identifying issues described *Acts of Inquiry* p 145. You should write a sentence or brief paragraph in response to each.

- (1) Draw on your personal experiences by reflecting on your responses to what we've been reading. What has concerned you the most? When you think about your life or the lives of those you know, are there stories or circumstances that support or challenge what you have read? What is your personal stake in the matter?
- (2) Identify what is open to dispute by formulating your reactions as an issue. State your view of the given topic and then state at least one view that is in tension with your own.
- (3) Resist binary thinking by cultivating more perspectives. When you've stated your view and the clear opposing view, are there others? What are they? (You may need to consult friends and/or family to help you see other sides to the issue, solutions to the problem, etc.)
- (4) Build on and extend the ideas of others by fitting your ideas into the following template:
"Although [some people/texts/institutions] would hold this, I argue this instead or in addition."
- (5) Discover and articulate a particular frame by aligning yourself with a particular perspective among many. You can do this by fitting your ideas into the following template:
"Although [some people/texts/institutions] would hold this, I agree with this person's/text's/institution's notion that holds something else because this notion is better in some particular way."
- (6) Consider the constraints of the situation by describing who might be care about your argument and in what form/forum they might encounter your ideas. What will your audience already know? What will they need to know? What do they find appealing in terms of format, medium, evidence? What restrictions do these details place on what you can say and how you can say it?

The question: can be formulated by following the steps described in *Acts of Inquiry* p 153. You should write a sentence or brief paragraph in response to each.

- (1) Refine your topic: Think about your topic in more than one simple word or phrase, identify aspects of the topic that are of the greatest interest to you. Your topic is a word, meaning in

general, meaning making, the role or structure of dictionaries. But what aspect of these things are you most intrigued by--the causes or word change, the consequences of meaning making? You may find it useful to fit your ideas into the following template: "I am interested in discussing this particular aspect of my general topic."

- (2) Explain your interest in this topic: It is perhaps useful to think about this in terms of what you hope to learn in exploring the topic. You may find it useful to fit your ideas into the following template: "I am interested in discussing this particular aspect of my general topic because I have these personal reasons."
- (3) Identify an issue: Identify a problem and make a supportable assertion regarding that problem.
- (4) Formulate your topic as a question: You should be able to rephrase our problem-assertion statement as a question that cannot be answered with a simple and factual "yes" or "no."
- (5) Acknowledge your audience: Reflect on what readers may already know about the issue, why they may be interested, and what you would like to teach them or inspire them to do. You may find it useful to fit your ideas into the following template: "I am interested in discussing this particular aspect of my general topic because I want these particular persons/texts/institutions to understand or do this particular thing."

thesis ('θi:sis, 'θe:sis)

T 13 July

(5-7 p ds) Make an argument that presents a definitive thesis supported by evidence from your research. Your claim can take a number of forms: You may make an argument about how successfully a dictionary (or set of dictionaries) can define a particular word; you may explore the strengths and weaknesses of several definitions before arguing the superiority of one of them or one of your own creation; you may make some argument about the believability of claims made by dictionary prefaces; you may explore what's allowed and disallowed by the content or structure of a dictionary's (or dictionaries') definition(s); or you may make an argument about the relevance of historical meanings on contemporary word use. Choose a topic that interests you and that builds out of the research you've already done for the class. Your paper can and should incorporate the work you've done in prior assignments.

gross ANALYSIS

Obs. rare.

A green fig; a young fig.

analysis I

R 15 July

(2-3 p ds) Write an analysis of Beverly Gross' essay "Bitch" in which you identify the situation, purpose, and audience of her work. You should also identify the primary and secondary claims, specifying for each whether you see it as a claim of fact, value, or policy and why. Chapters 3 and 7 of *Acts of Inquiry* will be helpful to consult here.

analysis II

M 19 July

(2-3 p ds) Write an analysis of Beverly Gross' essay "Bitch" in which you identify and evaluate her evidence, concessions, and counterarguments. Use the rubrics for evaluation suggested in *Acts of Inquiry* Chapter 7.

thesis, revisited

T 20 July

Revise your *thesis* paper. Keep in mind that you can use our peer review, the rhetorical chapters from *Acts of Inquiry*, and/or your rhetorical assessment of Gross' work to inspire and guide those revisions.

(1-2 p ss) Write a critical reflection on your revision process, explaining what you did, why you decided it was important to do, how you did it, and what effect—good or bad or somewhere in between—you feel it to have had.

constructing DEFINITION

The action of the vb. CONSTRUCT; construction.

anatomy Loewen

W 21 July

(2-3 p ds) Write an anatomy of the argument offered in James Loewen’s “Handicapped by History.” Your anatomy should identify the situation, purpose, audience, primary claims, and key supports of his work. In addition, you should choose two terms from Loewen’s text that you think are crucial to his argument; use a quotation or two where he seems to be defining those terms to explore what he understands them to mean. (*Heroification* is an obvious choice, but you should think broadly; *textbook*, *education*, *American*, *history*—these are all equally strong options.)

anatomy Gladwell

R 22 July

(2-3 p ds) Write an anatomy of the argument offered in this chapter of Malcolm Gladwell’s *Outliers*. Your anatomy should identify the situation, purpose, audience, primary claims, and key supports of his work. In addition, you should reflect on ways in which Gladwell’s argument seems to respond to Loewen’s: Are they in agreement? Does Gladwell’s work build on or depart from Loewen’s? Do the two situations have a common cause?

connection

M 26 July

(1-2 p) Create your own “Connection Worksheet” as described in Chapter 10 to help you connect the texts we’ve been thinking about over the past week.

synthesis

T 27 July

(2-3 p ds) Make and support a claim that synthesizes at least two of the texts we’ve discussed in class over the past few days. Your argument should isolate a key idea, term, or phrase common to both/all of your objects of inquiry: It should not only show how each text defines that idea, it should also explain what’s at stake in those definitions and how those definitions might be seen to speak to one another. Your paper might end up by making a claim of fact: “When X says *happy*, X doesn’t mean what Y does when she says *happy*,” a claim of value, “When X says *happy* it means _____, but when Y says *happy* it means _____, which definition is clearly more relevant to [some group of people],” or a claim of policy, “X shouldn’t actually take issue with *happiness* because *happiness* actually means something completely different than he thinks it does as evidenced in _____ actually means something completely different than he thinks it does as evidenced in Y’s argument where *happiness* means _____.” (Chapter 10 of *Acts of Inquiry* will be helpful in pushing you from summary to synthesis.)

defining MOMENT

n. an event or occasion considered (esp. in retrospect) as epitomizing or determining the course of subsequent related events; a turning point.

term

W 28 July

(2 p ss) Make a collection of two to four terms (concepts, ideas) in which you are intellectually, personally, politically, or obsessively interested. Write a brief paragraph about each that does the following:

- (1) Explains what the term means to you; offers a working definition.
- (2) Describes (or imagines) three to four places—texts, spaces, images—where that term is defined.
- (3) Explore how different those definitions are from one another and whether or not that matters.

SAMPLE TERMS AND PARAGRAPHS

Angela Connelly

This phrase means a lot to me because it IS me! I define myself in lots of different ways at lots of different times and I'm interested in the "concept" that is me exactly because it's basically impossible to make a working definition of me. There are many places where this term is defined in some way so I'll just focus on the things that are sort of like definitions of me that I have made: my Facebook page for one, my college admission essay is another, a scrapbook I made about my senior year of highschool, my resume, my room, my clothes. All of those things define me kind of differently, but some of them are not that different. If you just looked at my clothes and my resume, I don't think you'd know I was the same person because my clothes are pretty much awesome and my resume is pretty boring. I guess that matters because it's sad my resume has to be so boring.

college student

I am a college student, which to me means coming to college, going to classes, taking exams, participating in the stuff that goes on around campus. And I guess it's important to mean because I feel like there is a lot of places where they have a certain way of thinking about what a college student is but I'm not really included in that idea. I think it's because I'm older, I'm the first in my family to come to college, I'm a parent. Places where "college student" is defined are the admissions stuff, the basic requirements, the class scheduling, the teacher's instructions (like in the syllabus and for assignments and labs). The HUB and posters and stuff around on the the campus. There's no one definition of "college student" in those places but I think that a lot of them create an idea of "college students" as having a kind of lifestyle that's not like mine. That matters I guess cause it makes me and maybe other people feel uncomfortable.

Web 2.0

What is Web 2.0? Well, that's up for debate. Here's my working definition/explanation. If Web 1.0 (the original web) was e-mail and web browsers like Netscape and Explorer, then the set of tools currently emerging into widespread use can be understood as a fundamentally different stage of the web – Web 2.0. Oh but you'd better believe that lots of other people are working on defining Web 2.0. One aggregation of top resources is Joshua Porter's Introduction to Web 2.0 lens at Squidoo. Lest anyone is taken too seriously (I do take this stuff very seriously), there's the insider satirists' network Bubble 2.0 Snark Group. There are blog definitions of Web 2.0 on Technorati blogs all the time. But the definition is contested and developed daily.

ax

Ax is a word some people use when other people use ask. It is sometimes but not always defined in traditional dictionaries or listed as one way of pronouncing ask. It is in some online dictionaries. It is in some slang dictionaries. The definition is really different from dictionary to dictionary. So many people pronounce the word this way, but dictionaries don't seem to respect that.

proposal

R 29 July

(1 p ss) Write a proposal for your final paper for this class (see prompt below) in which you (a) identify what term you'll be investigating, and (b) list the sites of definition you think you'll be most interested in, and (c) imagine a few (2-3) working thesis statements you might pursue in a draft. Bring this document to your conference.

research

M 2 August

Chapter 5 and 6 of *Acts of Inquiry* offer a few modes for conducting research. Your assignment is to read *one* of these chapters and conduct some research that will support your final paper (see prompt below). Choose your own adventure...

Chapter 5, "Finding and Evaluating Sources" will guide you research that is mostly academic and/or written works. It will help you search for and through books, journals, articles, and web resources. Once you've read the chapter, you need to make an annotated bibliography (1-2 p ss) of 4 different sources you investigated. The annotation should (a) cite the source in accordance with MLA or comparable style, (b) identify the situation, purpose, audience, and primary claim of the source—particularly as it relates to *your* key term, and (c) evaluate the source (is it knowledgeable, credible, scholarly, popular, biased, recent, relevant, accurate, reliable, etc?).

Chapter 6, "Conducting Field Research" will guide you in conducting interviews, making site observations, and performing surveys. Once you've read the chapter, you'll need to carry out one of these modes of field research in support of your final paper and write a summary (1-2 p ss) of your findings. (Notes on "Writing Up the Interview" are included on page 100, on "Analyzing and Presenting the Data" from an observation page 106-107, on "Analyzing and Presenting the Results" of a survey on page 114-115.

Please note that for any adventure you choose, it's the journey that's most important—the document you produce is really just an opportunity to record your findings, make some mental notes, and spur your own project—by providing evidence, concessions, counterarguments, or claim refinements.

paper

W 4 August

(5-7 p ds) Your final paper should evidence you entering a conversation about how a certain term, concept, or idea is defined. The final paper should make a claim and support it. (See *Acts of Inquiry* if you need help identifying an issue, formulating a thesis, supporting a claim, or conducting research). You'll be given the opportunity to revise and resubmit by R 5 August.