Four thoughts to start our journey. . .

The moment:
"For perhaps the only time in your lives, you will know, existentially, that the life of the mind is soul-sized. You will be stretched till you squawk. And if you're not--transfer."
- Father Timothy Healy (former President of Georgetown University), to incoming students about what a meaningful college experience should involve

The problem:
"We don't learn from experiences. We learn from reflecting on experiences."
- Kristen Ulmer, former US Ski Team member

The method:
"The longest way round is the nearest way home."
- Kieran Abbey (And Let the Coffin Pass, 1942)

The goal:
"You cry and moan and say it will work out
But honey child I've got my doubts
You can't see the forest for the trees."
- Linda Ronstadt ("Different Drum")

* * * * *

* Office: The Stadium, 266C. Go to Gate 11 (far northeastern corner--all the way going counterclockwise). Go past Office #188 to next door on left. That next door will have a sign to its left: "ST111." Another sign is higher, marked Gate 11 and with instructions to Printing Services. Enter, and go up stairs. Turn right at top of stairs, then left into Hallway 266. 266C is a corner office with a wonderful eastern view.
* Office Hours ("Comma Club"): Tuesdays and Thursdays: 2:00-3:00, and by appointment.
* Office Phone: 303-(49)2-7282 (note: do not leave messages; email is better)
* Email: peter.kratzke@colorado.edu. Note: so that I can file emails properly, please title "subject" line with your name and course/section. For instance: "Joe Tate, 1100-014"
SECTION ONE: CCHE CRITERIA

WRTG 3020 meets the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) criteria for an advanced writing course (GT-CO3) in the Colorado system of higher education through the following principles.

Extend Rhetorical Knowledge. Rhetoric is, according to Aristotle, "to see the available means of persuasion." In this course, we shall consider effective strategies for distributing ideas, using evidence, and shaping language for given audiences and purposes--one need only observe the radical differences across our three major assignments to see how these strategies must come into play (from academic argument to job-seeking materials to formulating proposals). We shall also employ reflective practices in workshop by informed response to each other's and our own work.

Extend Experience in Writing Processes. Reading, speaking, and writing are dynamically related in developing, revising, and editing our writing. In this course, writing and speaking will be emphasized within a community of colleagues. Our workshops will provide opportunities for constructive feedback as well as incorporating feedback into the development of subsequent work. Assignments demand research methods and handling specialized sources connected to issues, language, and modes of analysis across disciplines. Along the way, we shall attend to the accuracy and relevance of sources.

Extend Mastery of Writing Conventions. Conventions define "discourse communities" (or, as I like to say, "communities of expectations"). Elements of effective writing style create awareness of the writing process. In addition, individual attention during student conferencing addresses how elements of writing that can be improved (including syntax, semantics, and grammar).

Demonstrate Content Knowledge and Advanced Communication Strategies. Advanced writing means understanding the dynamic concept of genre. In this course, the progression of assignments, as well as work with peers, heightens awareness of the "situational" relationship between content and audience.

SECTION TWO: CU AND THE PROGRAM FOR WRITING AND RHETORIC (PWR)

Let us shift to how the Program for Writing and Rhetoric (PWR) responds to the CCHE's stipulations. The following is the program's overview of objectives for 3020.

"Open to Juniors and Seniors in the College of Arts and Sciences, WRTG-3020 (Topics in Writing) sharpens critical thinking and critical writing skills. The course focuses on rhetorical forms students will use in academia, in the workplace, and in the civic domain, across a full spectrum of persuasive strategies, including analysis and argument. This course reinforces skills taught in first-year writing classes and builds on them, with a greater emphasis on the situational nature to writer, reader, subject, and purpose in the formation of a text."
Topics in Writing courses focus upon specific subjects, but these courses are not intended to supplement one's knowledge in a major. Rather, the topic serves as a means to an end--to create a knowledgeable audience and a context for discussion and writing: a discourse community. In a workshop setting, students engage in a dialogue with their audience, working out meaningful theses, testing rhetorical strategies, responding to objections and potential objections, and revising (and revising, and revising!) to meet the needs of their readers. Instructors of 3020 courses demand a high level of student participation and emphasize each student's role as both writer and as audience: observant, inquisitive readers of the writings of others. Students should leave a 3020 class as more sophisticated writers who understand that the rhetorical situation--rather than a rule book--will invite unique responses based upon their particular goals. This experience should help them recognize writing as a form of personal engagement, demanding an awareness of the inherent power of language and its ability to bring about change.

To that end, the PWR's institutional approach to WRTG 3020 has established goals within four key areas:

Critical Thinking and Its Written Application
The Writing Process
Rhetorical Situation
Mechanics and Style

Critical Thinking and Its Written Application
* See writing as a form of personal engagement, demanding an awareness of the inherent power of language and its ability to bring about change.
* Pose and shape a question at issue.
* Locate and use resources when necessary to exploring a line of inquiry.
* Evaluate information sources for credibility, validity, timeliness, and relevance.
* Draw inferences from a body of evidence.
* Distinguish description from analysis and argument.
* Distinguish flawed from sound reasoning, and be able to respond to and challenge claims.
* Recognize a thesis, and understand the organic relationship between thesis and support in an essay.
* As writers, structure and develop points of argument in a coherent order to build a case; as readers, recognize this structure and development within texts.
* Critique one's own works in progress and those of others.
* Recognize that academic and public writing is dialogic, addresses an audience, and anticipates the thinking, the questions, and the possible objections of readers.

The Writing Process
* Understand writing as an ongoing process that requires multiple drafts and various strategies for developing, revising and editing texts.
* Understand that revision is informed by critical dialogue.
* See the critical analysis of others' work as relevant to one's own writing.

Rhetorical Situation
* Exercise rhetorical skills: frame issues, define and defend theses, invent and arrange appeals, answer counterarguments, and contextualize conclusions.
* Value writing as a collaborative dialogue between authors and audiences, critics, and colleagues.
* Make decisions about form, argumentation, and style from the expectations of different audiences.
* Recognize that a voice or style appropriate to one discipline or rhetorical context might be less appropriate for another.
* Develop "topic"-specific language that is appropriate for the defined audience while also intelligible to a non-expert audience.
Mechanics and Style

* Convey meaning through concise, precise, highly readable language.
* Apply the basics of grammar, sentence structure, and other mechanics integral to analytical and persuasive writing.
* Develop skills in proofreading.
* Use voice, style and diction appropriate to the discipline or rhetorical context.
* Use paragraph structure and transitional devices to aid the reader in following even a complex train of thought.

SECTION THREE: BRIEF COURSE OVERVIEW AND CRITICAL SPORTS STUDIES

This section of WRTG 3020 will emphasize what may be called practical rhetoric in continually probing what sort of compositional decisions will be effective in a variety of situations. Although our assignments will center on our subject, our readings will raise larger questions about logic and, ultimately, citizenship. This larger perspective will take us to the discussions about what is summarized as "advanced rhetorical knowledge" and centered in the field of Rhetoric/Composition. In the end, all students will have the opportunity to leave this course with a rhetorically oriented understanding of the writing process that they can use for any occasion in pursuing their professional careers.

Given our emphasis in Rhetoric/Composition, the metacognitive engine running this course is defined in the Liberal Arts core tradition of critical thinking and literacy. Through hearing, speaking, reading, and writing, students will develop these two facilities that define, I would argue, nothing less than one's personal and cultural identities. In all, students should heed the words of Alexander Pope, whose words are the truest ever inked about education:

"A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again."

In the spirit of Pope's warning, I demand only three overriding, sequential qualities in students whenever they enter my classroom: curiosity, hard work, and honesty. The plain truth so well encapsulated in the Latin phrase Nullum Gratuitum Prandium. Only given this approach, I believe, might one ever achieve true enthusiasm.

Beyond our approach to critical thinking and literacy, we shall attend to the issues of Critical Sports Studies (CSS). This emerging field, as the CU's CSS site describes, "examines sports and their social, cultural, historical, and economic contexts [...]." In our journey this semester, we shall, along with considering an overview of the field, attend to special readings that focus our larger assignments tied to writing and rhetoric.

SECTION FOUR: COURSE DELIVERY

Sections Three and Four of this syllabus overlap a bit, but allow me to consider for a second the classroom environment. At some level, how one teaches is what one teaches, so to discuss "course delivery" is more than a matter of formulating assignment progression, assessment, classroom format, and even use of technology. Perhaps the best encapsulation of delivery for any good writing course was perfectly rendered by Sir Francis Bacon, who distinguished, "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man." This relationship between reading, speaking, and writing is one I stress in "delivering" our curriculum and keeping our focus on one question: how will what we learn apply to your future?

We shall treat the classroom as a "space" for responding to our readings and writings. Workshops center on the principle of collaboration and will involve brainstorming ideas, peer editing drafts, and reading aloud before small and large groups. Email exchange of drafts between partners might also ensue. For my part, assessment of the first two major assignments will feature a recursive process (called "revisiting") that will allow you to improve your skills based on my quantitative comments and qualitative grading. Where the classroom stops and individual conferencing begins, sometimes, is fuzzy, but everyone will find his way to my office for one-on-one conferencing. To whatever delivery mode, "academic citizenship"--and, in the end, social responsibility--hangs in the balance.
For our readings, we shall draw on a variety of primary and secondary materials. That said, do not confuse this course for one centered on "sports in literature." Rather, our readings will center on either rhetorical theory or largely informational essays from the world of sports journalism, and our emphasis on what we do with information—that doing, not the information itself, represents our curricular focus. All of this serious purpose aside, I must confess, it would not hurt—even as it is not necessary—for you to have more than a passing interest in sports. Throughout the course, after all, I shall use sports to illustrate ideas, and our arguments will attend to traditions and issues from the world of sports. Yes, then, we shall think about sports, but, for you to carry from this course the kinds of skills that you can use anywhere, you must almost always think about thinking about sports.

What are the writing assignments involved in our journey? After a period of orientation (OK: call it "boot camp" if you wish) to what is called the Rhetorical Triangle, we shall dive into three major assignments (a number that is a more-or-less specified curricular requirement for any WRTG 3020 course). By the end of the term, "the ball," as it were, "will be in your court." As for the substance to our three major units, the first explores categories ("creating a box," I call it). The second considers contextual analysis ("creating a box and putting something it"). The third moves to the time-honored argumentative question of appreciation ("creating a box, putting something in it, and judging the whole"). For more information, please consider the prefatory discussions in both the schedule (Section Twelve) and assignment prompts (Section Thirteen). Throughout the course, we shall never lose sight of key skills: considering rhetorical strategy, taking positions, distributing our ideas, substantiating the resulting lines of thought, honing style, and publishing with professionalism.

Beyond the classroom, you might note two underused resources: my office hours and the Writing Center (in Norlin). Not to use these resources, I think, is like buying a movie ticket but not going into the theater. As well, we shall use D2L.

SECTION FIVE: TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Texts

All students are expected to have their own materials (i.e., "sharing" is counter to classroom discussion and academic citizenship).

* On-line: Purdue's Online Writing Lab (OWL): http://owl.english.purdue.edu/. Contains material that lays a foundation for communication in theoretical and practical terms. Our use of this site extends our use of information literacy by balancing electronic reference with our own (print) texts.

* On-line readings. In D2L (under "Course Content") are posted most readings. You will print these materials early in the semester for subsequent preparation and "meditation" responses (see Section Thirteen). Instead of your buying a textbook, then, consider printer supplies as equivalent in your financial budget.

Supplies

* Fine-point pens (blue ink)
* A folder with two horizontal pockets (i.e., not a manilla folder, three-ring binder, etc.)
* Notebook paper
* A printer. Consider your very own printer your "textbook" costs for this course--to be clear: not just access to a printer such as those in the library. Beyond this item, never find yourself without back-up printer supplies. "My printer ran out of ink" is, from the perspective of teachers, a very tired comment.
SECTION SIX: COURSE POLICIES
"Competence is of a piece"

Attendance. Attendance is assumed and can affect your overall grade. I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. For your semester grade, the following is a breakdown of the barren policy:

1-4 absences: no change in overall grade
5 absences: no grade higher than a 3.0
6 absences: no grade higher than a 2.3
7 or more absences: no grade higher than a 1.7
8 absences: failure in course

Notes

* Failure to have, when required, prepared readings (that is, prepared on a paper copy) will result in .5 absence for the day.
* Plan to get sick; do not "skip" arbitrarily. Overall, plan your absences and be on time.
* Do not email me about missing a class nor to "see what I missed." Rather, practice the "buddy system." To do as much, maintain a roster of at least three class contacts.
* Prearranged, university-recognized absences count toward your overall allotment of absences. One proviso: I shall not lower an overall grade for only university-recognized absences. In such cases, I shall allow one "grace" absence. Please ask questions should this policy affect you.
* Two late entries to class equal one absence. If your absence total is thereby accounted between increments, your total will be rounded up (e.g., from 2.5 to 3 absences).
* An entry to class more than 10 minutes late will be counted as a full absence; likewise, leaving class early will be counted as a full absence (in that case, please advise me before class).
* Missing a scheduled office appointment will count as one absence.
* Unless arranged prior to class, no make-up work will be allowed.
* Lapses in classroom protocol (for instance, "texting" during class) will count at least as an absence for the day (see special note in Section Eleven).
* I may not, by law, discuss grades over email—including final grades for the course.

Complaints. Before you do anything, please consult with me should you have a question, comment, or other consideration about the class content or my conduct/teaching. If we can reach no amicable solution, then I shall work for you in discussing the matter with the appropriate authorities.

Institutional. A writing class offers a special opportunity to discuss work in progress in a supportive yet critically demanding environment. As you develop drafts, you should bear in mind that you are "going public" with your work. This act carries with it an obligation for civil discussion and for understanding the concerns of your audience and their interests in your point of view.

* Unless you prefer otherwise, I might use your writing for classroom discussion.
* Last day to drop. Should the occasion arise, students are responsible for dropping themselves from the course and verifying the process.
* I may not report or discuss grades by phone or e-mail. Should, at any time during the semester, you want to know how you are doing in the course, please see me during office hours.

Preparation and Participation (Classroom Protocol)

* Use the restroom prior to class; presuming to leave the classroom is not acceptable behavior.
* Turn off and stow all cellular phones, laptop computers, and other electronic devices. Failure to comply will be considered under both attendance and Academic Citizenship (see Section Eleven).
Prepare to discuss, extemporaneously, the who, what, where, and when of any assigned text (the full measure of the how and why are the job of the class). Be certain to look up any word that you do not know. As a result, annotating (“preparing”) the margins of your texts is a skill that will truly distinguish you in the classroom--and beyond.

Beyond preparing the readings, be prepared to answer the following questions for each assigned text:

1. Why does/does not the text "fit" the syllabus?
2. What is the author's implicit or explicit thesis?
3. What are the author's organizational and rhetorical strategies?
4. How does the author's style complement substance?

For each class session, your preparation and voluntary, informed participation include having your own copy of any texts (no sharing) and the entire reading assignment prepared (not almost all of it). I almost need not add that, when we print-and-prepare readings, you should not submit a Reading Meditation if you do not have a prepared text in class: fair is fair, after all.

Have notebook paper and pen ready. Remember: Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance (PPPPP). Put another way, "When you fail to plan, you should plan to fail."

Regarding Writing Assignments

- All exercise prompts will be developed in class.
- Do not send unsolicited drafts to me over the email.
- Exercises are due at the beginning of the class period for each due date.
- Only those exercises that have been drafted according to the syllabus schedule will be accepted for full credit.
- When requested, be prepared to submit all written assignments in a folder with two horizontal pockets. The left side will contain all previously graded or requested work (and nothing else), the right side only those materials to be graded. This modified portfolio reflects your progress: work that manifests work responding to previous work and feedback.
- Keep Xerox copies of all assignments you submit--just in case. I am not responsible should one get misplaced or lost. Also, I may ask that you supply clean copies for program assessment.

SECTION SEVEN: UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Disabilities. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu.

If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions: Injuries, Surgeries, and Illnesses guidelines under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Observances. Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please notify me in advance, and I shall accommodate you. See full details at the following:

http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Classroom Behavior. Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at the following:

http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code
* Discrimination and Harassment. The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh

* Honor Code. All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at the following:
http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

English as a Foreign Language. If you speak English as a second language, then you need to contact me before the second class meeting so that I can better assist you in the course, advise you about special ESL courses, and/or refer you to appropriate services on campus.

A Special Note about Plagiarism. Consult with me or the appropriate bibliographic guides should you have any questions about the procedures of documentation or the penalties for infractions of academic dishonesty. Any infractions will result in sanctions that include (but are not limited to) peremptory failure for the course. See, as well, honor code information at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/.

SECTION EIGHT: ASSIGNMENTS

After shorter assignments based on writing skills, critical thinking, and rhetorical decisions, we shall turn to three longer assignments that build one to the next. These exercises emphasize increasingly complex logic underlying argument as well as increasingly sensitivity to audience and rhetorical purpose. Then, we move to our major units. The first assignment centers on categorical polemics and is geared toward a general academic audience. The second assignment centers on contextual analysis and, so, moves to wider (even global) discourse communities. The third centers culminates in true argumentative engagement as well as multimodality.

Notes

* Beyond the preceding short overview of our assignments, please refer to unit headings in the schedule (Section Twelve) and the full assignment prompts (Section Thirteen) for more information about pedagogical purpose, rhetorical issues, concrete occasion, and assignment stipulations/direction.
* The normative "page count" for advanced writing courses is approximately 50 pages of considered and finished work. In our fulfilling this expectation, you should understand the following overview:

Introductory unit exercises (Unit One): 3 pages
Categorical polemics essay (Unit Two): 4-6 pages
Contextual analysis pieces of evidence (Unit Three): 3-4 pages
Contextual analysis essay (Unit Three): 5-7 pages
Unit One and Two revisiting: equivalent of 4-6 pages
Argumentative engagement and multimodality annotated bibliography (Unit Four): 3-4 pages
SECTION NINE: INFORMATION LITERACY

Building on your training in 1150 (remember RIOT?), we shall pursue "informed conversation" through "information literacy." One aspect of "information literacy" means that you be able to employ various technologies related to word processing, internet and library research (e.g., on-line databases, electronic books and journals, bibliographic software). Another aspect of informational literacy involves, simply enough, that you be able to ask good questions--that you be able to determine, evaluate, and incorporate information for a given purpose toward what becomes the creation of knowledge (whether academic, civic, or professional). Still another aspect of information literacy centers on knowing the economic, legal, and social issues underlying this creation. Taken together, these aspects of information literacy show that argumentation is not only practical but social: it reveals why we think what we do as we move to collective decisions. Argumentation, Aristotle observed, thus verifies knowledge in whatever sphere.

SECTION TEN: TECHNOLOGY

This class will use e-mail communication for messages from me, for individual attention, and at times for the circulation of drafts. Please check your university e-mail account (Colorado.edu) at least once each day. If you use a non-university e-mail account (e.g., hotmail, msn, et al.), be sure to link it to the university e-mail account. On occasion, I shall also employ other elements of the "smart" classroom (videos and "Elmo"-type projection). Finally, we shall employ D2L for, at the least, distribution of materials. For any related help regarding technology, contact 735-HELP for the Information Technology Help Line.

SECTION ELEVEN: EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

"Never mistake activity for achievement."
- John Wooden

Grading. Grades are more and less complicated than they might seem. Should you have any questions--at any time--please consult with me in my office (you might ask, "Should the course end today, what would be my grade?").

On a philosophical basis, I evaluate (both for exercises and overall grades) in the spirit of William F. Irmscher's Teaching Expository Writing, here adapted. Note that each word in Irmscher's formulation is important: demonstrates . . . unusual . . . competence.

Demonstrates unusual competence: A
Suggests unusual competence: B
Demonstrates competence: C
Suggests unusual incompetence: D
Demonstrates unusual incompetence: F
On a quantitative basis, your grade in the course will be a semester grade, not a direct response to any given assignment. Regardless, here is a rough breakdown:

* "Academic Citizenship" (10%) is composed of the following:
  1. Attendance
  2. Preparation of readings; A- and B-level students fail to be prepared no more than once for the entire semester, if at all. Such preparation is not excused by failure to attend (that is, to skip a day for which preparation is expected is to fail to be prepared).
  3. Informed and voluntary in-class participation: A- and B-level students engage the class community in meaningful, informed ways that reflect that, to start, they have indeed read (if not prepared) a given day's material.
  4. Language skills test ("Qu-est"); A- and B-level students do well (at least 6/10 for a B and 7/10 or higher for an A).

* Unit 1: 0%
* Unit 2: 30%
* Unit 3: 30%
* Unit 4: 30%

Notes

* Because you will have the opportunity to earn a higher grade through "revisiting" (revision) your first two major assignments, you cannot earn an overall grade higher than one full letter increment of your lowest assignment grade (e.g., if your Unit Two assignment grade is a 2.7, then you cannot earn better than a 3.7 for the overall semester grade). All revisiting should be completed by the specified date.
* "Texting." Students caught texting during class must also see me in my office prior to resuming the course. After a student's first occurrence of "texting" in class (which will result in an automatic absence), the student must turn in place his/her phone/device on the front desk during class sessions for the remainder of the semester. If the student fails to do so and is again caught "texting," the student's overall semester grade will automatically be lowered to no higher than a C (2.0). The third offense will result in a failing grade (0.0) for the semester, and the student may not continue to attend classes. Let me be crystal clear: texting is rude to both me and your fellow students--the act is conscious, after all.

SECTION TWELVE: SCHEDULE

Odds-and-Ends

Abbreviations and explanations:
* DNP = Do Not Print. Materials designated as such will serve for general discussion. You should read them and be prepared to discuss their general contents; whether you do or not will be painfully obvious to everyone. No Reading Meditation is required for these materials.
* P&P = Print and prepare. I shall explain proper preparation early in the semester, but note that both your attendance and your course grade depends your engagement of preparation.
* RM = Reading Meditation. Unless otherwise noted, you should print and prepare these readings as well as composing a RM. See Section Thirteen for more information.
* OWL = Purdue OWL. You do not need to print these references, nor will we explicitly cover them in class. That said, get nosy and explore!

Other notes
* The syllabus is subject to change--especially the assignment prompts and readings--so watch for announcements.
* Unless otherwise indicated, all readings are posted on D2L.
* Titles to readings are sometimes approximated; I am confident that you will find your way.
* Titles to OWL sections are approximated (they change), but I am confident that you will find your way.
* For all workshops, bring a printed copy of draft/requested materials to class. Note that an absence for a workshop will count against you in the assignment's final grade.
* A tip: prepare all weekly readings for each Tuesday; to prepare Thursday's readings between Tuesday and Thursday will only create unwanted pressure (and haste).
* No Final Examination.
UNIT #1: EXPLORING THE RHETORICAL TRIANGLE
"Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe."
- Abraham Lincoln

Purpose toward Rhetorical Knowledge. As the ways persuading a given audience for a given occasion, rhetoric involves that we achieve of a systemic view of writing at the heart of any competency. By "systemic view," I mean an awareness of how parts relate to the process of the whole. Syntax, semantics, grammar, and even genre: all are "at play" as we become aware, as I shall say again and again, of "why we are doing what we are doing while we are doing it"--a kind of expression at the heart of "reflective practice."

WEEK ONE (Aug. 26, 28): Words, Words, Words
"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less."
"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."
"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master--that's all."
- Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking Glass

Tuesday
Learning Objective: overview of language and rhetoric/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* Linguistic competence and rhetorical power: "transfer"
* Metacognition: literacy (awareness/knowing) versus fluency (consciousness/feeling)
* "Inventing the university" (a phrase by David Bartholomae)
* Academic, professional, and civic writing
Reading
* Handout: "Just Between You and I"
* Handout: "Notes on Language"

Thursday
Learning Objective: overview of language and rhetoric/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing convention
Topics/Content
* Forms and functions
* Syntax, semantics, and grammar
* Rules and principles in systemic views: the key to all competencies
* "Little" and/or "hard" words: denotation and connotation
* "Sexist" language
Reading
* DNP. "Genius Is Perseverance in Disguise" (Looney)
* DNP. "To Build a Fire" (London). Consider two questions for classroom discussion:
(1) Where, exactly, do we see curiosity, hard work, honesty, and enthusiasm at issue to the man's fate?
(2) When, exactly, do we know the man shall die?
The lesson: listen to the Old-Timer!
* Print for study. "Four Principles of Sentence Dynamics"

Assignments
* Exercise 1A due (for all assignments, see Section Thirteen of this syllabus)
WEEK TWO (Sept. 2, 4): Sentence Dynamics
"There's nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and open a vein."
- Walter Wellesley "Red" Smith

Tuesday
Learning Objective: sentence Dynamics/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* Approaches to writing/the writer's craft: pragmatic, cognitive, romantic, and ideological
* Subjects and (simple) predicates: more important than you think!
* Sentence dynamics (sentences vs sentences)
* Sentence patterns (simple; complex--periodic, loose; compound)
* Sentence linking ("monkeys in a barrel")

Reading
* DNP. "Writing Lesson" (Fish)
* DNP. "How to Mark a Book" (Adler)
* Print for study. "Rules and Principles"
* DNP. Reading Meditation example
* DNP. "Core Knowledge (5th grade)"
* OWL: "Grammar and Mechanics"
* OWL: "General Academic Writing"

Thursday
Learning Objective: sentence dynamics/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* Punctuation
* Errors and mistakes

Reading
* DNP. "The War against Grammar" (Mulroy)
* DNP. "100 Most Often Mispronounced Words and Phrases in English"
* DNP. "Top Errors"

Assignments
* Show-and-Tell Festival (details TBA)

WEEK THREE (Sept. 9, 11): Handling Evidence and Shaping Paragraphs
"They lard their lean books with the fat of others' works."
- Robert Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy (1621)

Tuesday
Learning Objective: research and bibliographic form and philosophy/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* Paragraphing ("claim-data-warrant"/introduction-evidence-commentary: the "paragraph template")
* The Classical canons: invention (including general logic), arrangement, style (including diction, syntax, and even bibliographic practice), memory (the ways we learn), and delivery (including modes of discourse)
* The Classical Rhetorical Triangle (Aristotle): ethos, logos, and pathos
* A Contemporary Rhetorical Triangle (Kinneavy): author, audience, and reality surrounding text
* PAEOFTS: Purpose, Audience, Evidence, Organization, Format, Tone, and Style
* Inference versus implication
* MLA/APA form and philosophy
* "Incorporation" versus documentation
* "Primary" versus "secondary" evidence
* Quotation, paraphrase, and summary

Reading
* DNP. "Analyze, Don't Summarize" (Berube)
* DNP. "Lance Armstrong Statement" (Armstrong)
UNIT #2: CATEGORICAL EXPOSITION
"You have to do what you think is right, and you have to do it to the best of your ability and let it go. You win a bunch of games, it doesn't mean you're a genius. And if you don't, it doesn't mean you're awful, either. It's always somewhere in the middle."
- Dan Hawkins, after being fired as CU's football coach (November 9, 2010)

Purpose toward Rhetorical Knowledge. Categorical logic is a crucial methodological tool for argumentation across and beyond academic disciplines. For instance, ideological criticism centers on categorical issues associated with race, gender, and/or class, and our humor often plays to reductive conclusions. At the same time, we should be cautious that any polemical "lens" is prone to overemphasis at the expense of accommodating counter-argument and appreciating nuance. In this unit, we shall explore why knowing that categories compose full spectra (what may thus be parsed as "categorical polemics") is crucial to cross-cultural appreciation. Along the way, synthesis of information (content)--and how to evaluate and handle information--will be crucial elements of our learning to write well. Research will derive from web-generated and library-based materials.

WEEK FOUR (Sept. 16, 18): Distribution of Ideas
"There are two kinds of people: those who are humble and those who are about to be."
- Clint Hurdle (former manager of the Rockies)

Tuesday
Learning Objective: distribution of ideas/CU/PWR: critical thinking/CCHE: content knowledge and advanced communication strategies
Topics/Content
* Cultural "texts": "Read the word, read the world"
* Questions at issue: "Everything is an argument"
* Deduction and induction in categorical logic
* Categorical logic: syllogisms/enthymemes
* "Polemics"
* Binary terms/"exemplary cases"

Reading
* DNP. "There Are Two Kinds of People" (Spira)

Assignments
* Language skills Qu-est
* Exercise 1B due

Thursday
Learning Objective: distribution of ideas/CU/PWR: critical thinking and the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* "The Big Five Questions"
* Logical distribution ("distribution of ideas")
* Basic structure, emphasizing exordium and peroration
* Introductions, thesis statements, and conclusions

Reading
* DNP. "Old Mistresses Apologue" (1745)

WEEK FIVE (Sept. 23, 25): The Structure of Argument (Introductions, Topics, Conclusions)
"Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien" ("The better is the enemy of the good").
- Voltaire

Tuesday
Learning Objective: the structure of argument/CU/PWR: critical thinking and the writing process/CCHE: rhetorical knowledge
Topics/Content
* Topic sentences: three criteria for rhetorical effectiveness
* Strategies for arrangement ("patterns of development"): spatial, creative, importance, process, topical (tied to the text at issue), chronological, et al.
* Strategies for refutation: "turning the tables," dilemmas, argument from residues, argument a fortiori, and contradictions/inconsistencies

Readings
* P&P (no RM). "Grant and Lee" (Catton)--for distribution practice.
* DNP. "Cowboys and Immigrants" (Morrow)
* Handout. "Exercise Contract"
* OWL: "Introductions, Body Paragraphs, and Conclusions for Argument Papers"

Thursday
Learning Objective: the structure of argument: introductions, topics, conclusions/CU/PWR: critical thinking and the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* Logical fallacies, especially the reductio ad absurdem and the "straw man"
* Issues/fallacies of intention and affect

Reading
* DNP. A survey of examples/essays centered on polemics, each with an eye to Critical Sports Studies:
  (1) "Great Expectations" (Walsh)
  (2) "Armchair Field Generals" (Jenkins)
  (3) "Baseball and Football" (Carlin)

Assignments
* Unit sign-up

WEEK SIX (Sept. 30, Oct. 2): Planning Your Work (Distribution into Lines of Thought)
"The wastebasket is a writer's best friend."
- Isaac Bashevis Singer

Tuesday
Learning Objective: distribution/CU: critical thinking and the writing process/CCHE: rhetorical knowledge
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
* Reading aloud
* Word processing: the two keys

Reading
* P&P/RM. "Examsmanship and the Liberal Arts" (Perry)
* OWL: "The Argumentative Essay"

Assignments
* Workshop: introductions
Thursday
Learning Objective: planning your work: distribution into lines of thought/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
Reading
* DNP. Sample essay—or, if you are wise, do print it!
Assignments
* Workshop: sample body paragraph and line of thought

WEEK SEVEN (Oct. 7, 9): Working Your Plan (Revision)
"I must be cruel only to be kind. Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind."
- Hamlet
Tuesday
Learning Objective: voice, tone, and audience/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: content knowledge and advanced communication strategies
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
* Revision and editing
Readings
* OWL: "Peer Review Presentation"
* OWL: "Proofreading Your Writing"
Assignments
* Workshop full drafts (your copy should be stapled)
Thursday
Learning Objective: voice, tone, and audience/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: content knowledge and advanced communication strategies
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
* Tip: "free-floating" (inserted) sentence and figurative language
Assignments
* Workshop full drafts ("dress rehearsal": bring stapled copies in folders with all previously graded materials)

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UNIT #3: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS
"Back then [in the early 2000s], [baseball] was a different culture."
- Alex Rodriguez (2009)

Purpose toward Rhetoric Knowledge. In its part along our journey toward true argumentation (which means we realize that genuine questions, in fact, do not have answers), this unit explores how occurrences ("texts") do not happen "in vacuums." We thus move to questions of historicism, analyzing "texts" through "co-texts." To be clear, historical analysis is not the domain of the History Department alone, and this unit pertains to various academic audiences, interdisciplinary methods, and "rich" content materials. Research will derive from web-generated and library-based materials.

WEEK EIGHT (Oct. 14, 16): "Things That Make You Go 'Hmmm'"
"It is almost impossible to remember how tragic a place the world is when one is playing golf."
- Robert Lynd
Tuesday
Learning Objective: analysis /CU/PWR: critical thinking and its written application/CCHE: content knowledge and communication strategies
Topics/Content
* "Fields"
* "Discourse communities"
* Causes and correlations: "Freakonomics"
* Historicism, historicity, historiography: "history is narrative"

**Reading**
* P&P/RM. "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" (Carr)
* DNP. "ESPN 30 for 30 Summaries"
* DNP. Pieces of Evidence example

**Assignments**
* Unit #2 materials due (submit in folder)

**Thursday**

**Learning Objective:** analysis /CU/PWR: ac critical thinking and its written application/CCHE: content knowledge and communication strategies

**Topics/Content**
* "Co-texts": ideologies, historical eras, and disciplinary concepts
* "The Hallowed Trinity" of American sports culture

**Readings**
A survey of essays/examples pertaining to "The Trinity" (with, in parentheses, suggested categories of issue):
* DNP. "1919 World Series: Black Sox Scandal" (Everstine) (ideological implications)
* DNP. "Wooden's Values" (Forde) (historical era)
* DNP. "College All-Star Game" (Grogan) (disciplinary concept)

**WEEK NINE (Oct. 21, 23): Historicism, Historiography, History IS Narrative**
"They made hypocrite [sic] judgments after the fact
But the name of the game is be hit and hit back."
- Warren Zevon ("Boom Boom Mancini": Mancini fought Du Ku Kim in a 1982 WBA lightweight championship bout; a right from Mancini in the 14th round caught Kim's head, and Kim was pronounced dead soon thereafter)

**Tuesday**

**Learning Objective:** contextual analysis in practice/CU/PWR: critical thinking and its written application/CCHE: content knowledge and communication strategies

**Topics/Content**
* American sports in a wider context
* Rhetorical sections versus paragraphs in lines of thought ("sub-distribution")

**Readings**
A survey of essays/examples pertaining to sports beyond "The Trinity" (with, in parentheses, suggested categories of issue):
* DNP. "Billy Jean Won for All Women" (Schwartz) (ideological implications)
* DNP. "Fists Raised, but Not in Anger" (regarding John Carlos and Tommie Smith) (Barra) (historical era)
* DNP. "Going to Extremes" (Markels) (disciplinary concept)

**Thursday**

**Learning Objective:** contextual analysis in practice/CU/PWR: critical thinking and its written application/CCHE: content knowledge and communication strategies

**Topics/Content**
* Various views

**Reading**

**WEEK TEN (Oct. 28, 30): Drafting Along**
"The art of art, the glory of expression and the sunshine of the light of letters, is simplicity."
- Walt Whitman

**Tuesday**

**Learning Objective:** voice, tone, and audience/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing processes

**Topics/Content**
* Collaboration

**Assignments**
* Workshop: introductions
Thursday
Learning Objective: Voice, tone, and audience/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing processes
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
Assignments
* Workshop: sample body paragraph and lines of thought
* Pieces of Evidence due
Reading
* DNP. Sample essay—or, if you are wise, do print it!

WEEK ELEVEN (Nov. 4, 6): Once Again, Unto the Breach of Submission
"The time to begin writing an article is when you have finished it to your satisfaction. By that time you begin to clearly & logically perceive what it is that you really want to say."
- Mark Twain

Tuesday
Learning Objective: logic/CU/PWR: the writing process /CCHE: writing processes
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
Assignments
* Workshop full drafts (your copy should be stapled)
Thursday
Learning Objective: logic/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing processes
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
Assignments
* Workshop full drafts ("dress rehearsal": bring stapled copies in folders with all previously graded materials)
* Language Skills Qu-est, Take Two

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UNIT #4: ARGUMENTATIVE ENGAGEMENT AND MULTIMODALITY
"If I have seen a little further, it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants."
- Sir Isaac Newton

Purpose. As a culmination to the journey toward argumentation, we move beyond academic analysis to argumentative engagement, especially in terms of multimodality.

WEEK TWELVE (Nov. 11, 13): Canon (Who's the Greatest?)
"DiMaggio was the greatest all-around player I ever saw. His career cannot be summed up in numbers and awards. It might sound corny, but he had a profound and lasting impact on the country."
- Ted Williams

Tuesday
Learning Objective: argument/CU/PWR: a critical thinking and its written application/CCHE: content knowledge and communication strategies
Topics/Content
* Traditions and canons
* Multimodality
* Pictures to text and text to pictures
Reading
* On the web: Snow Fall (John Branch, New York Times)
* DNP. "Overrated Survey Sports Illustrated"
* DNP. Digital Storytelling Cookbook (Lambert)
Assignments
* Unit #3 materials due (submit in folder)
Thursday
Learning Objective: argument/CU/PWR: a critical thinking and its written application/CCHE: content knowledge and communication strategies
Topics/Content
* The Intentional and Affective Fallacies
* The Fallacies of the Contemporary and the Nostalgic
* Principal issues of canonicity
* Annotated bibliographies (due Week Thirteen)

Readings
P&P/RM about one of the following—you will be assigned which. A survey of essays/examples regarding the individual (with, in parentheses, suggested categories of issue):
* DNP. "Re Roger Clemens" (Duffy) (historicism: forgetting that we did not know then what we know now)
* DNP. Bobby Fischer" (Anthony) (artist and the art, part 1: great athlete but bad person)
* DNP. "Conscience of a Sportsman" (re Ashe) (artist and art, part 2: not great athlete but great person)
* DNP. "Who is Major Taylor?" (Alston) (forgotten/vestigial sport)
* DNP. "The Summer of the Jeopardy Guy" (Simmons) (the sport's inclusion in the canon)
* DNP. "Moe Norman" (Silliman) (ostracized outsider, set apart by sanctioners of canon)
* DNP. "Re Len Bias" (Kornheiser) (the "What if?" trap/problem of longevity)
* DNP. "All That Racket" (Robson) (effect of technology)
* DNP. "Greatest Boxers of All Time" (Mulvaney) (level of competition)
* DNP. "Forgive Rose" (Anderson) (any Hall of Fame and the inconsistencies of precedent)

WEEK THIRTEEN (Nov. 18, 20): A Job Market Intermezzo
"Every day I get up and look through the Forbes list of the richest people in America. If I'm not there, I go to work."
- Robert Orben (American magician and professional comedy writer)

Tuesday
Learning Objective: the writing process/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* Cover letters, resumes, and interviews

Reading
A survey of views:
* DNP. "Job Market Humbling" (New York Times)
* DNP. "Million Dollar Cover Letter" (Myers)
* DNP. "10 Ways to Rock Your Resume" (Gordon)
* DNP. "12 Indirect Interview Questions" (Forbes)
* For review, in OWL: relevant sections about job searching ("Job Skills Checklist," "Resumes Design," etc.)

Thursday
Learning Objective: the writing process/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing conventions
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
* Cover letters, resumes, and interviews

Assignments
* Workshop resumes and cover letters
* Annotated bibliography due

Thanksgiving Opportunity: Nov. 25, 27

WEEK FOURTEEN (Dec. 2, 4): The End Is Near
"If speaking doesn't threaten your own stability, your ability to stand, then you probably don't have a good enough reason to speak."
- Anne Bogart

Tuesday
Learning Objective: refutation/CU/PWR: critical thinking and its written application and the writing process/CCHE: content knowledge and communication strategies
Topics/Content
* Collaboration

Assignments
* Workshop
Thursday
Learning Objective: refutation/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: content knowledge and communication strategies
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
Assignments
* Workshop: videos!

WEEK FIFTEEN: (Dec. 9, 11): Finished but Never Done
"Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."
- Darrel Royal (longtime football coach for the University of Texas)

Tuesday
Learning Objective: voice, tone, and audience/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing processes
Topics/Content
* Collaboration
Assignments
* Workshop: more videos

Thursday
Learning Objective: voice, tone, and audience/CU/PWR: the writing process/CCHE: writing processes
Topics/Content
* Edmundson revisited
Assignments
* Unit #4 exercise due (no folder or Exercise Contract necessary)

SECTION THIRTEEN: ASSIGNMENT PROMPTS
"If we had to say what writing is, we would define it essentially as an act of courage."
- Cynthia Ozick

Note: All assignment prompts will be developed ("tweaked") in class. The following prompts, in other words, are meant as much to complement our discussions as they are in some way fully explanatory.

Reading Meditations. For each of the readings noted as "RM" (that is, not in the "DNP" category), you will bring to class what we will call a Reading Meditation. Use MLA header and Courier New 12 font; single-space the printed document but double-space between paragraph/sectional changes. For each Reading Meditation, compose three questions that you see as important to "resonant" information about the reading at issue (that is, information that has larger thematic or rhetorical implications, especially in terms of whatever is the curriculum for that day). Follow each question with (1) the answer and (2) a two-sentence (and no more than two-sentence) assertion-and-comment justification about the answer. See the Microsoft Comments in the example for more information. Note: Reading Meditations are meant as integral to a day's classroom discussion and, therefore, may not be submitted late; as well, at times, I do not even collect these exercises.

Unit #1: Exploring the Rhetorical Triangle
"A man that [sic] is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea. If he tries to climb out into the air as inexperienced people endeavour to do, he drowns--nicht wahr? [. . .] No! I tell you! The way is to the destructive element submit yourself, and with the exertions of your hands and feet in the water make the deep, deep sea keep you up."
- Stein, in Joseph Conrad's Lord Jim

Purpose/Pedagogy. The following two short exercises work toward a rhetorical awareness of sentence and paragraph craft. The former will build on a principle-based view of syntax and diction; the latter on the rhetorical underpinnings of "handling evidence for a purpose." The second assignment, in particular, begins our engagement with "discourse communities" (that is, how and about what specialized groups think). The use of marginal annotations ensures metacognition at the heart of "reflective practice."
Assignment Prompts for Unit #1

Exercise #1A: Personal Connection. One paragraph (no more than seven sentences)
In one paragraph, explain what you hope to achieve in this course. Consider, if you wish, content from the syllabus, identifying whether any aspect(s) of it might be of special concern. Use Courier New 12 font, double-space, and format given MLA (header, etc.).

Exercise #1B: Paragraphing and Reflection.

Compose three separate paragraphs, each following our template. The upshot of these paragraphs will largely the same. As well, the first sentence of each paragraph will be identical, simply stating a general view of a public person (for example, "Bill Smith is considered nice"). Then, for your two pieces of evidence in each paragraph, use the following:

Paragraph #1: Two pieces of documented primary evidence.
Paragraph #2: Two pieces of documented secondary evidence. One should be a quotation and the other should be a paraphrasing/summarizing.
Paragraph #3: One piece of documented primary evidence and one piece of documented secondary evidence (in whatever order).

Now, a screw-ball: annotate in your first paragraph (by hand, rather than using the likes of Microsoft Comments) the following elements of the "paragraph template":

(1) topic sentence (annotated as "TS")
(2) introduction of first piece of evidence (annotated as "Intro.")
(3) first piece of evidence (annotated as "Ev. #1")
(4) commentary about first piece of evidence (annotated as "Com. #1")
(5) transition/introduction of second piece of evidence (annotated as "Trans./Intro.")
(6) second piece of evidence (annotated as "Ev. #2")
(7) commentary about second piece of evidence (annotated as "Com. #2")

* In addition to the elements of our "paragraph template," annotate one element of style from "Rules and Principles" and one interesting element not from Rules and Principles about syntax, semantics, or grammar. Most likely, you will attend to terminology from Notes on Language with this second element.

Notes and Reminders

* Each paragraph element will not necessarily equal one sentence, so attend to how single sentences often serve multiple rhetorical purposes.
* Follow (on the same page) with a Works Cited.
* Be sure to title the assignment response.

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Unit #2: Categorical Exposition

Bonnie: "Don't let it end this way."
Brian: "Everything ends badly. Otherwise, it wouldn't end."
- Cocktail (1988)

Purpose/Pedagogy. This "nuts-and-bolts" assignment ensures a rhetorical knowledge of academic (traditional) argumentation. All rhetorical elements of argumentation are at issue in this expository exercise: taking a position (thesis), distributing a thesis across a line of thought, mastering bibliographic form and function in handling primary and secondary materials, crafting sentences with precision, and presenting a correctly formatted manuscript. The assignment will be graded given a "rubric" that formulates academic argumentation both quantitatively and qualitatively. Finally, we shall begin "workshops." These sessions involve "going public" by formulating ("brainstorming") ideas, reading aloud before individuals and groups, and critiquing each other's writing.
Assignment Prompt for Exercise #2. 4-6 pages (4 body paragraphs), at least 4 sources. Audience: general academic. Explain a given category in sports culture given two people (individual human beings) who exemplify the category's range formulated in binary terms.

The spirit of the prompt: to demonstrate the craft of writing in all its elements, including (1) forming a thesis, (2) distributing a term, (3) shaping paragraphs, (4) handling evidence for a purpose, and (5) writing sentences with precise style.

Example of basic terms in action:

Category: The game strategy of MLB starting pitchers
Exemplary cases: Greg Maddux and Bob Gibson
Binary terms: covert and overt

Disallowed Assignment Responses

* Baseball pitchers for a category.
* "Power/finesse," "overt/covert" as binaries.
* For this assignment and for all others to follow, you may not use materials we cover in our readings.
* We shall not engage literary analysis in this course, instead defining our own "texts." As such, do not use as a "text" material from a short story, movie, and other literary source.
* No repeat exemplary case groupings within classes.
* The relevant lives/careers of your "exemplary cases") may not be concurrent. Most of the time, this parameter will mean that one of the players will be active while the other will be retired.

General Notes

Introduction/Formulation

* In your introduction/thesis, do not list the topics from your line of thought.
* Beware the "either/or" fallacy (i.e., false polemic).
* Use adjectives (not nouns) for binary terms. Do not use adjectives that have chronological implications (e.g., "old school" versus "new school").
* Binary terms should not be substantively connected to either your category (much less your exemplary cases). In other words, the binary terms should be widely applicable to other categories (e.g., in the category of scientists, "tinkerer" and "thinker" are too close to actual methods and are not encompassing enough).
* For the sake of rhetorical completion, keep categories as "tight" as possible.
* Given that your introduction should be about 5-7 sentences (two-thirds of a page), you should bring up your exemplary cases no later than your third sentence. Not to mention them until, at the worst, your thesis is almost a sure sign that you're funneling, and remember: "To funnel is to fail."
* Not to mention the actual binary terms until the thesis statement (remember: the last sentence of the intro) is fine. In fact, given our thesis statement template (in which the binary terms are clearly formulated), I think not mentioning the binary terms until the end of the introduction works nicely.
* Thesis statement template: all students must use:
  "In the category of C, Exemplary Case 1 and Exemplary Case 2 exemplify the range from Binary Term 1 to Binary Term 2."
* Between your thesis paragraph and your body, place your distributive question. See the sample exercise. We shall continue with this practice for the other two major assignments.

Topic and Topic Sentences (for the Body/Line of Thought)

* The "gut check" question for a topic: Does the topic necessarily separate the two sides of a category? Anything particular to the biography, for instance, is almost never an element of categorical distribution. For instance, for a skier to be born is Austria does mean that he/she necessarily is a downhill racer.
* In keeping with our "gut check" question, remember that categorical logic is never equivocal (a topic is or is not
part of the category). As such, words such as "perhaps," "sometimes," "usually," or "often" do not pertain.
* Keep topics (which you should be able to identify in a word or phrase) focused solely on distributing the category. As such, do not mention binary terms or exemplary cases in topic sentences. Do, however, mention the category in each topic sentence.
* Topic sentences should not have a sense of issue or chronological basis.
* For topic sentences #2-#4, use periodic sentences. To define: a periodic sentence has a subordinate (dependent) element before the independent main clause ("After we took the test, we began to study").
* Pay strict attention to transitional phrasing, often building that phrasing from your rationale for arrangement ("Why am I moving from Topic X to Topic Y?").
* Beware of topics that shift from the intrinsic (that is, integral to the category) to the extrinsic (that is, associated with the category through audience reception). Thus, to shift from "play on the field" to "conduct off the field" is a very bad sign.
* Statistics are never a suitable topic from distribution because numbers are nothing in and of themselves. How a baseball batter hits, for instance, is not a number! Rather, ask, "What does a statistic show?"
* Do not in any fashion lapse to side-after-side presentation (this assignment centers on topic-by-topic distribution).

Paragraphing

* In each body paragraph, use your binary terms in handling evidence—that is, in your introduction or evaluation of evidence. Although the practice might seem dogged, it will serve our purpose for this exercise.
* Use a mixture of approximately 50% primary and 50% secondary evidence.
* Use two (and only two) pieces of documented evidence in each body paragraph—one for each "side." For this assignment, one paragraph = one topic.
* Maintain order of presentation (which "side" goes first) throughout the body paragraphs/rhetorical sections.
* After first mention of full names (e.g., "Bob Gibson"), use only last name ("Gibson"). One curious possibility is that a person is known by his/her first name. When that is the case, formulate the first time: for example, "Magic Johnson (commonly called 'Magic') is a cook."
* In your conclusion, you might consider the range within the category because, after all, a range should indeed be at issue.

An Outline

(Paragraph #1): Intro, culminating with thesis statement (use the thesis statement template). No funneling!

(Paragraph #2): Body Paragraph #1
Topic sentence (do not mention exemplary cases or binary terms)
Exemplary case #1: use the relevant binary term (in whatever grammatical form) to handle the documented piece of evidence
Exemplary case #2: use the relevant binary term (in whatever grammatical form) to handle the documented piece of evidence

(Paragraph #3): Body Paragraph #2
Topic sentence (do not mention exemplary cases or binary terms). Use a periodic sentence, the subordinating part of the sentence used to hook your reader from Topic #1. If you do not remember/know what constitutes a periodic sentence, please review.
Exemplary case #1: use the relevant binary term (in whatever grammatical form) to handle the documented piece of evidence
Exemplary case #2: use the relevant binary term (in whatever grammatical form) to handle the documented piece of evidence
(Paragraph #4): Body Paragraph #3
Topic sentence (do not mention exemplary cases or binary terms). Use a periodic sentence, the subordinating part of the sentence used to hook your reader from Topic #2.
Exemplary case #1: use the relevant binary term (in whatever grammatical form) to handle the documented piece of evidence
Exemplary case #2: use the relevant binary term (in whatever grammatical form) to handle the documented piece of evidence

(Paragraph #5): Body Paragraph #4
Topic sentence (do not mention exemplary cases or binary terms). Use a periodic sentence, the subordinating part of the sentence used to hook your reader from Topic #3.
Exemplary case #1: use the relevant binary term (in whatever grammatical form) to handle the documented piece of evidence
Exemplary case #2: use the relevant binary term (in whatever grammatical form) to handle the documented piece of evidence

(Paragraph #6): Conclusion. No funneling!

While You Draft

* The best responses (A- and B-level) will mix on-line and print publications as well as primary and secondary sources.
* Remember to disable all "Autocorrect" features (in Word, go to Tools > Autocorrect).
* MLA format: ellipses have spaces, and we shall use brackets: [. . .].
* For any web sites, please supply a one-word parenthetical reference. Example, "Joe Smith writes in this web site, 'The sky is blue'" (Smith). A very short web site title will be fine, too, as long as it leads your reader to a given item in the Works Cited. Example: "The game lasted until 12:35" (Baseball), with the actual title Baseball Statistics in the News and Nation.

Presentation

* Number each body paragraph: 1, 2, 3, and 4.
* Insert in the middle of the paragraph three Xs (XXX) directly before you move from the first half of the paragraph to the second.
* Underline your binaries in each body paragraph.
* Submit in a two-pocket folder. Place in the left side Exercises 1A and 1B. Place in the right side your categorical polemics exercise (stabled, with Exercise Contract as your final page).

* * * * *

Unit #3: Contextual Analysis
"Writing gives you the illusion of control, and then you realize it's just an illusion, that people are going to bring their own stuff into it."
- David Sedaris (June 5, 2005)

Purpose/Pedagogy. This assignment builds on the categorical logic practiced in Unit #2 but progresses to a more dynamic handling evidence in connecting general to specific evidence ("putting something in the box"). The same elements of presentation (Microsoft Comments, presentation in folder, use of rubric) reinforce learning objectives.

* Preliminary: For this unit, you shall submit a Pieces of Evidence document of 10 entries for the contextual part of the work--nothing for the "text: to be submitted. Divide your evidence into the five main sections: see the example and follow it as precisely as possible (due at the end of Week Nine).
Assignment Prompt for Exercise #3. 5-7 pages, at least 5 sources. Use 5 sectional topics for your line of thought (for a total of 6 body paragraphs composing the line of thought). Audience: general academic or civic--and, hence, not experts in history, etc. Identify an amazing-but-not-surprising, defined, and finite occurrence ("text") in sports history dating before 2000 and analyze it given a larger context. The occurrence must be encompassed within one day.

The spirit of the prompt: to engage in "creating knowledge." As such, too-obvious essays--ones that work almost by definition--should be avoided. For instance, to analyze that anything to do with US/Soviet sports competition from about 1960-2000 had to do with the Cold War is to say . . . not much. Rather, the challenge will be to find a "text" that demands analysis in the first place. As such, lesser-known "texts" offer your best route for a successful assignment response.

Disallowed Assignment Responses

* The Gilded Age for a context.
* No repeat "texts" among students, and I shall allow only three duplicate "contexts" across the class (for instance, The Cold War).
* No texts covered in ESPN's Thirty for Thirty series.
* The following "texts"--along hose represented in our class readings--are disallowed:

1899: Charles Murphy's mile-a-minute bicycle ride
1910: Jack Johnson versus James Jeffries fight (the material for Ken Burns documentary)
1920: Anything to do with Babe Ruth
1935: James Braddock versus Max Baer fight (the material for Cinderella Man)
1936: Anything to do with Jesse Owens' Olympics (in fact, the entire XI Olympiad)
1938: Seabiscuit versus War Admiral match race (the material of Sea Biscuit)
1943-54: Anything to do with the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (the material of A League of Their Own)
1947: Anything to do with Jackie Robinson's breaking MLB "color line" (the material for 42)
1966: Anything to do with NCAA Basketball Championship (Texas Western's starting five black players) (the material of Glory Road)
1970: Marshall Football Team plane crash (the material of We Are Marshall)
1972: "Munich Massacre"
1972: Anything to do with Uruguayan rugby team crash (the material of Alive)
1972: Anything to do with Title IX
1980: Anything to do with US Olympic Hockey Team (the material of Miracle)
1980: Anything to do with US boycott of Moscow Olympics
1984: Anything to do with Soviet Union's boycott of Los Angeles Olympics
1986: Anything to do with death of Len Bias
1995: Anything to do with South Africa rugby cup (the material for Invictus)

General Notes

* For your "text," although the occurrence should be encompassed within one day, your evidence need only pertain to the day--especially in evidence that leads to the date (evidence after the date is most likely to shift to cause-and-effect, so be careful).

* Occurrences that involve the establishing of this-or-that league or signing of this-or-that regulation are far too vague to consider for this assignment, so let us disallow such approaches.

* For your context, you must choose one of the following approaches.

(1) A well-established, non-sports-related, researchable ideology (what typically--but not necessarily--gets studied by academics as an "ism": e.g., Puritanism, Federalism, Communism, Populism, Modernism, et al.). Most of the time, these isms have embedded in them a sense of chronology, but, sometimes, they need focus: 1960s Feminism (which one could call a part of the 1960 Women's Movement), 1890s competitive capitalism (which is far different from, say, 1980s capitalism), and so forth. An example of what would not work for this assignment is a too-general
term such as "racism" or "elitism"; these general terms might be suitable for Option #3 (see below), but you would need to delimit given the perspective of a defined academic discipline (e.g., what Sociologists mean by the term "racism" or "elitism").

(2) A well-established, non-sports-related, researchable umbrella term for a given historical era (e.g., The Industrial Age, The Gilded Age, The Jim Crow Era, The Roaring Twenties, The Cold War, The Great Society, et al.). To be clear that we have perspective, let me emphasize that disallowed are any umbrella terms that substantively relate to sports or in any manner are substantively related to a given "text" (e.g., The Golden Age of Boxing, The Steroid Era, The Free Agent Era, et al.); instead, look to a wider perspective. Of course, the term should not be a mere decade ("1980s," etc.).

(3) A well-established, non-sports-related, researchable disciplinary (that is, academic) principle/concept. Examples: supply-and-demand from Economics, gravity from Physics, Freudian conflict from Psychology, "soft determinism" from Philosophy (as with Leopold and Loeb), and so forth. Your thesis must be clearly delimited given the academic discipline. For instance, you might say "what Economists means by supply-and-demand," etc.

Introduction and Line of Thought

* Thesis statement template: all students must use (in at least some close variation):
"X (the occurrence/"text") might be amazing today (or from whatever perspective), but it was/is not surprising given Y (the context, stated as one of the assignment's three intellectual options)."
* In your line of thought, distribute the context into topics ("points"). As such, do not mention the occurrence ("text") in your topic sentences. Do, however, mention the context in each sectional topic sentence (see sample essay).
* For topic sentences #2 and following, use periodic sentences.
* Although chronology might play a part in your line of thought, it should not be the only tactic because chronology too often leads straight to "plot summary." The grotesque periodic sentence would thus be "After X happened, Y followed."
* Body paragraphs should have an even, nice balance between how the context (however defined) foregrounds the given occurrence ("text"). As such, do not not not mention the occurrence ("text") in the first half of each body paragraph (the first half of each body paragraph is the time to explore some distributed point of the context). Only in the second half of each paragraph should you move to the question of the topic's relevance to the occurrence ("text").
* For the contextual half of each paragraph, principally focus on secondary evidence (but not necessarily to the exclusion of primary evidence--after all, we are in the world of concepts). For the second half of each paragraph, I think a 50-50 mix of primary and secondary evidence is the norm.
* For each body paragraph, use one central piece of documented evidence for the contextual topic and one central piece of documented evidence for the occurrence ("text")--no more, even when other material supports these two pieces of evidence.

Presentation

* Number each body paragraph. Example: 1, 1A, 2, 3, 4, and 5.
* Insert in the middle of the paragraph three Xs (XXX) directly before you move from the first half of the paragraph to the second.
* Submit in a two-pocket folder. Place in the left side Exercises 1A, 1B, and Unit #2 graded work. Place in the right side your categorical polemics exercise (stabbed, with Exercise Contract as your final page).

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Unit #4: Argumentative Engagement and Multimodality
"You can't wait for inspiration. You have to go after it with a club."
- Jack London

Purpose/Pedagogy. This assignment represents a hybrid of the rhetorical elements from categorical exposition (Unit #2) and contextual analysis (Unit #3). Moreover, because we shall practice multimodality, rhetorical dexterity is needed.

* Preliminary: An annotated bibliography of 10 items pertaining to the assignment. In the main, the convention of annotated bibliographies is pretty easy: one simply appends to each item in a Works Cited-formatted list short, fragmented comments--two or three for each will do.

Example (utterly fictitious):
Johnson, Fred. Baseball Players and Their Worlds. New York: Scribners, 1965. Considers the nature of how Major League baseball players live their lives, including in their financial dealings and road trips. Focused on three players in particular: Bill Franklin, Mark Wilson, and Joe Sanderson. Concludes with a view of how baseball relates to other major sports.

Assignment Prompt for Exercise #4: Identify a "text" (e.g., a person's career or specific achievement) in sports history dating before 1990 that you think is either overrated or underrated (or, perhaps better, mis-appreciated). You will then produce two components to the assignment: a video and an accounting of reflective practice in composing your video. Present a case about a defined "text" (person, place, or thing) (1) that dates before 1990 and (2) that you believe is either overrated or underrated (or, perhaps better, mis-appreciated) by a given discourse community. At issue: what problem of canonicity formulated in our readings underlies the case?

Video. Compose a 2-to-3-minute (or so) multi-modal video presentation that combines in some fashion (1) narration, (2) photographs, (3) illustrations, and (4) text. Other elements such as video and music might pertain but are not required. More details TBA.

Reflective practice. For the writing part of this assignment, track (account for) your compositional decisions. In so doing, categorize your decisions by (1) style in terms of writing the script from formal and informal drafts, (2) selection in terms of your video's content and composition (arrangement, effects, etc.), and (3) rhetoric in terms of the process of fusing all modes/media. Each category of "reflective practice" should be composed of four items, each covered in one (and only one) paragraph. Note: I consider this part of the assignment as indicative of your ability to identify "why you do what you do while you do it." As such, this document—more than the video itself—will determine your grade. For the reflective analysis, about 6 pages (double-spaced, Courier New 12, with Works Cited).

Disallowed: all previous parameters regarding readings and ESPN. Also disallowed are halls of fame for discourse communities.