

Career Research (20%)

Now that you've started your new job, it is your responsibility, with the help of supervisors, mentors, and possibly the person who had the job before you, to become an expert at the tasks you are expected to perform from day to day. And, since you'll do them every day, many of them will quickly become intuitive to you. Still, they will not start out intuitive and you might be asked to perform a task with which you are unfamiliar with very little training. Plus, you will still have to explain what you do to others and, at some point, you might need to pass that job on to someone else. So, this assignment asks you to put some of the skills we have already started practicing to the test and teach yourself a new genre or genres. You will then have to write a cover letter applying for your dream job and reflecting some of that new knowledge. Using your research from the Career Research Bibliography, you will deconstruct each genre and teach the conventions you identify to your classmates. As you do so, and in the process of annotating a Job Description and writing a Cover Letter, you will also learn how to write in those genres. As such, your final portfolio for this unit will also include two original documents that imitate two of the genres you researched.

Throughout the construction of this portfolio, you will be asked to put yourself in someone else's shoes. If you were writing the job description you annotate, what would you need someone else to know? If you were applying for a new job that requires many of the same skills you are now performing every day, how would you describe them to a future employer? If you had to pass on your job to someone you may never meet, how might you prepare them to write in potentially unfamiliar or surprising genres? Describing the skills you have based on the daily tasks of your current job, how would you present them to a future employer?

Toward that end, you will prepare a presentation and complete three deliverables (pieces of an assignment), as well as a final portfolio of revised work.

Annotated Job Description: Find a job description for a job you might want after you graduate. Annotate it with margin notes, identifying what skills and materials you will need to apply, what skills you may need to develop, and areas where you feel they could have provided more information. Does the job description provide salary information? Education requirements? A description of the company or of your duties? Then, write a Reflection Memo, following the Memo template, of 250-500 words exploring what you would still need to learn in order to apply for this job and do it well.

Cover Letter: Many of you have probably written a Cover Letter before. It is essentially a letter to a potential employer explaining why they should hire you based on the skills and experience on your resume. Here you will want to include the job you are applying for (the one advertised in the Job Description you annotated), how you found out about it, and the most relevant skills you have to offer. Then, explain the specific duties you had at the jobs on your resume and how they will contribute to the organization to which you are applying. Lastly, be sure to thank them for their time and offer to answer any questions they might have. In 300-500 words (no more than 1 page, single-spaced), show them why they need you. You'll be surprised at how qualified you actually are.

Genre Presentation: Using the research you did for the Onboarding Process, identify 3-5 genres that are standard to your field. Remember, many of these genres may not be what you expect, so,

in your research, explore multiple resources to learn as much as you can about your field. To prep for the presentation, deconstruct each of these genres as we have often done in class. Identify the affordances and limitations of each genre and map out its conventions, as well as ways you might deviate from those conventions. Then, prepare a 5-8 minute presentation to teach me and the rest of the class how to write in those genres. Since the presentation is so short, you will need to think about what is most important to convey and how to convey it in a way that is both entertaining and informative. By the end of your presentation, we should be able to write in at least one of the genres you have introduced.

Genre Imitations: Choose two of the genres you taught in your presentation. Include an annotated example of each genre, identifying conventions and expectations of the genre. Then, write your own document in each of the two genres. You might write them as if you were working for the job in your Job Description or find another aim. Either way, they should have a clear purpose and reflect an expert-level understanding of each genre. You only have about 1000 words, so you can write an excerpted portion of one or both genres if needed.

You may not imitate any of the genres we are learning in this class for this assignment.

Final Portfolio: Collect your Job Description, Cover Letter, and Genre Imitations together, and make sure they are revised and polished. Also include your Reflection Memo (detailed in the Peer Review Instructions). When applying for many jobs or introducing yourself to a mentor or a new client, you will often present a portfolio of your or your organization's work. Treat this Portfolio as you would such a professional portfolio. Perhaps get a folder or report cover. Make sure the pages are clean and professional looking. You will turn in a **hard copy** of this portfolio in class on the due date.

Formatting guidelines of each assignment are attached.

Important Dates:

- Monday, February 21st or Wednesday, the 23rd: Present your Genre Presentation to the class.
- Monday, February 28th: Annotated Job Description due in class. We will be using it for that day's activity.
- Monday, October 4th: Procedure Manual Draft with Annotations due in class. Use the Peer Review Instructions to guide you as you annotate the draft. We will do Peer Review in class, then you will turn in the draft with your annotations and your peer's comments at the end of class. Use the Peer Review Draft forum to submit the assignment.
- Wednesday, March 2nd: Cover Letter Draft with annotations due in class. After Peer Review, your peer should submit the draft with your annotations and their comments to the Cover Letter Draft forum. You will use this draft to revise for the Final Portfolio.
- Monday, March 7th: Genre Imitations with Annotations due in class. After Peer Review, your peer should submit the draft with your annotations and their comments to the Genre Imitations Draft forum. You will use this draft to revise for the Final Portfolio.
- Monday, March 21st: Work Procedure Final Portfolio due **as a hard copy** in class.

General Guidelines:

- Consider your audience and the particular genres of each Deliverable. Remember, I am not your only audience. If you had to give this to a potential employer, how would you want to present yourself? For example, since the Cover Letter is for a potential employer and the Procedure Manual is for a current employer, you might need to do more to sell yourself as a good fit in the former.
- The Cover Letter and Procedure Manual are formal documents. They have an expected format and should contain certain information. That said, they should also reflect who you are and what makes your way of doing the work you do unique or innovative. Find the balance between professionalism and personal voice.
- Be confident! You deserve this job, and you probably have more experience than you think. Please come and talk to me during office hours at any time, but especially if you are unsure of how to convince someone else to hire you.

Grading:

You will be graded on

- Time and effort spent with a pen in hand or at your keyboard writing, revising, and polishing
- Attention to genre and audience
- Thoughtful engagement and detailed description
- Participation in the entire writing process, from brainstorming and early drafts to a final polished submission with responses to all peer and instructor comments

You will **not** be graded on

- Exacting replication of form. Be creative and take risks! You might find a way of communicating with others, or of thinking about yourself, that invites productive professional relationships and helps you think about your relationship to your profession.
- Perfect grammar and spelling. While I **do** expect you to proofread, we are all still learning, and you may still make some mistakes. Do your best and ask questions.
- Level of nervousness during the presentation.