

PROFILE (150 PTS)

First Draft Due Tuesday, 10/1

Final Draft Due Thursday, 10/3
(in a two-pocket folder and on BB)

RATIONALE

Whether you know it or not, you've probably read more than a few profiles in your life—in magazines, on websites, in the school paper. As our textbook explains, "A profile presents a subject in an entertaining way that conveys its significance, showing us something or someone that we may not have known existed or that we see every day but don't know much about" (Bullock 233). While they are enjoyable to read, they also provide valuable writing lessons for those who compose them. For writers, profiles are an excellent way to deepen our skills of inquiry and observation. We need to bring our curiosity to the table, and we must be creative in the ways we interact with our subject matter and imagine what our reading audience will want to know. The goal is to provide our readers with an interesting, thought-provoking, and cohesive piece of writing that reveals our subject in unique ways.

YOUR TASK

For this assignment, you will be writing a profile about a building (of your choice) on our campus. In and of themselves, buildings might not seem like interesting subjects; we go in and out of them, we walk past them, but we rarely pay them much attention. Yet every building has an inner life, its own history and personality—and this is where your profile comes in! In this essay, it will be your job to demonstrate what about the building you've chosen is special (imagine that you are writing for an audience of your peers—other members of the ISU community). In addition to acknowledging its surface-level purpose (i.e. as an academic building or a dorm), you must also describe what makes it interesting: how the space is used, who tends to occupy this space and why, what gives it a life of its own, etc. This assignment will continue to develop your skills of description and narration, but you will also be developing the skills needed to conduct analysis and field research (such as interviews, taking observation notes, etc.—**for some guidelines on conducting field research, see pages 506-510 of our textbook**). You will need to take extensive notes while observing your building (not only about its physical features, but also about what you observe on extended visits to the space) and **interview at least one person in the building** (such as a student who lives or takes classes there, or a faculty member who teaches or has an office there). Your essay will then "tell the story" of this building in a way that helps us get to know it more deeply than we would by simply walking past it.

FORMATTING

- ✚ Required page length: 3-4 pages
- ✚ Times New Roman size 12 font¹
- ✚ Double-spaced
- ✚ One-inch margins all around
- ✚ Your essay must have an **original title**
- ✚ The first page of your paper should look like the example of a properly-formatted MLA-style document, which can be found here:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_sample_paper.html

¹ Your use of font is important. Times New Roman, size 12, is easy to read, which is helpful for me as I will be receiving a *lot* of essays. I appreciate your compliance with this requirement!

EVALUATION CRITERIA

CONTENT—Does the essay respond thoughtfully and creatively to the assignment? To what extent does the essay utilize the various elements of a strong profile, such as a clear angle, vivid details, insightful observations, and relevant interviews? Is there solid reflection upon, and analysis of, the significance of this building to campus life, so that we understand why it has been chosen as the subject of a profile?

ORGANIZATION—How effective is the sequencing (the order in which information is presented) of your essay? Are your paragraphs focused and connected using successful transitions? Is all the material that is included, or information that is presented, made relevant to the essay's angle? How effective are the opening and closing of the essay?

STYLE—Are your sentences clear and maybe even sophisticated? Do you vary your sentence structures to create interest for the reader? Is your vocabulary precise and mature, avoiding repetition and vagueness? To what extent is your essay free of mechanical errors (spelling, punctuation, usage, etc.)?

SCORING

Your essay will be evaluated according to the following characteristics:

Purpose/Focus (20 pts): The essay's focus (angle) is clear, easy to identify, and successfully demonstrates understanding of the assignment's genre (Profile).

Descriptive Elements (30 pts): The essay demonstrates strong field research, such as meticulous firsthand observations, engaging details, and dialogue from relevant interviews.

Reflection/Significance (30 pts): The essay contains insightful discussion of the significance of this building to the campus community and demonstrates the building's unique "personality".

Organization (10 pts): The essay follows a logical organization suitable for a profile, with clear time markers and transitions; all included material is relevant to the profile's angle.

Style (10 pts): Writing is polished and reasonably free from errors that obscure meaning and clarity.