

RPW 300.

Dr. Beth Jorgensen.

Semester Project: Part 1 Context Report.

This document has been formatted to accommodate individuals with reading and visual challenges and to work effectively with a digital screen reader.

Overview.

For your semester project, you will work in a group of 4-5 students to research the racial disparities and/or police shootings that gave rise to the Black Lives Matter movement.

To accomplish Part 1, each student will write a documented research report on a related topic to establish a context out of which the protests emerged. Your context report may take a long view of history or you may establish your context upon

current events. For example, you may choose to research governmental or business/disciplinary practices that gave rise to racial disparities that continue to exist in the US or you may discuss the history of conflict between police and blacks in the US, or another relevant topic.

A discipline, in this context, means "a region of activity, knowledge, or influence," such as the major you're choosing to pursue in college.

Your context report is worth 200 points.

In Part 2, you will work with your group to develop a narrated PowerPoint presentation that brings together the information each group member reported in their context report. Clearly, this requires that you read each group member's report.

You don't need to come to agreement with regard to your position on the topics, but you must present these disagreements and indicate what questions they raise and what sort of data is required to address the points of disagreement and what research methods would be appropriate for acquiring the data.

You should also propose a partial solution(s) or an approach to attaining a partial solution(s) to the concerns. For example, you may choose to examine calls to defund or abolish police departments or you may discuss a change in business/disciplinary practices or another relevant solution or approach.

Part 2 is worth 150 points. I will upload a detailed rubric for your group PowerPoint later in the semester, but you should write your context report with it in mind.

While your audience for the project includes your classmates and me, you should consult with your group to determine a larger audience outside this class to whom your arguments and your support for arguments will be relevant. As discussed in class, every document has a target audience; it's nonsensical to say "everyone" or "all voters" as authors choose their appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos for specific audiences.

Part 1: Context Report.

This assignment is Part 1 of your semester project

You must clear your topic with me and you should consult with your group to make sure that you're writing on topics that overlap and intersect, as these reports will provide the context for the narrated

PowerPoint presentation you will submit at the end of the semester. **Do not write on exactly the same topic.** Instead, look at the broader picture and assign group members topics that address elements of the broader picture. Your research and observation questions will be helpful in this process.

For example, your group may choose to look at the problem of police brutality; your research question may be:

What methods are most effective in reducing injury and death at the hands of the police?

Observation questions may include:

In what ways might de-funding police departments serve to reduce injuries and deaths among civilians?
What does it mean to "defund" the police?

What police practices encourage excessive aggression? How do they do so?

These are just a couple of examples of observation questions; you may have many more. Keep in mind that for your individual reports you can treat each of these observation questions as a research question and break them down into further observation questions. For example, if your individual research question is:

What police practices encourage excessive aggression? How do they do so?

your observation questions may include:

What aspects of police training contribute to an "Us v. Them" mentality?

What aspects of physical training contribute to an aggressive attitude?

What aspects of comradery among police officers contribute to the problem?

While I resist word and page counts for fear (knowledge, actually) that students will reach word or page count by "padding" their sentences with long phrases and quotes and other tricks to achieve length, your paper should be 1200-1500 words or 6-7 pages when produce in Times New Roman, excluding visuals and other design elements.

Your submission for draft 1 will be text only. Instead of wasting your time trying to think of how to use the most words to say something, I expect you to use your time to research and write in a concise, but stylish manner.

For draft 1, you will use Times New Roman 12-point typeface and 1-inch margins.

Getting Started.

Before you begin writing, you should **always** save your blank document with your last name plus the name of the assignment as follows:

JorgensenContextReport.

Writing begins with research rather than with a thesis, as you cannot formulate a thesis, a claim, until you know the facts and analysis provided by expert researchers and writers.

Therefore, you should begin research immediately by reading a wide variety of sources on your topic. Your final Works Cited page requires 20 sources,

but you will likely have to read more than 20 to begin to have an educated understanding of the topic. You should be sure to read authors with a variety of opinions and insights. You may use sources from the Canvas module, but these sources should be listed in addition to the 20 you have found on your own.

Appropriate sources include reports from journalism, academic studies, reports from government agencies, and narrative perspectives (first-person accounts), but at least half of your Works Cited must be academic studies or governmental reports.

Journalistic sources must be reports rather than editorials, and you should be looking for investigative reports rather than "event" reports.

You must submit a working bibliography of 10 sources on **Sunday, September 27 by 11:59 PM.**

Failure to do so will result in a 5% reduction of your final grade.

Structuring Your First Draft

Your name, the class and section, and the title of the assignment, should appear in the upper right-hand corner of the header, as follows:

Jorgensen. RPW 300-01. Context Report.

Audience Summary: You should write up to 150 words describing your audience and your strategies for persuading your audience to accept your thesis. You should consult with your group to determine a consistent audience to whom each group member will be addressing their arguments. Your audience summary **does not** count in your final word count.

Your report must have an eye-catching title to engage your reader.

Paragraphs: Each paragraph should focus on a single topic.

Concluding paragraph: Your concluding paragraph should sum up your position.

Questions raised by your research: Following your concluding paragraph, you should include a list of relevant questions that remain to be answered. These questions will serve as the "launch pad" for your research and observations questions.

The first draft of this assignment is due on **Sunday, October 4 at 11:59 PM**. Failure to upload a draft will result in a 5% reduction of your final grade. This draft should include an additional 5 sources. This

draft of your paper will also go through peer review to help you develop, revise, and edit your final draft. Before you edit this draft, you must turn on the "Track Changes" function in Word to document your revisions.

The second draft of this assignment is due on **Sunday, October 11 at 11:59 PM**. This draft should include an additional 5 sources. Failure to upload a draft **with changes tracked** will result in a 5% reduction of your final grade.

Your second draft should begin to apply the principals of document design laid out in the modules. You should choose a color scheme and contrasting fonts for the body and headers, include relevant visuals that illustrate your points, including charts, graphs, photographs, and other graphics as relevant. Visuals must include alt-text. Always

consider your target audience when choosing your visuals and layout.

This draft should also be structured as a professional report, including a memo of transmittal, cover page, draft of your table of contents, introductory paragraph, research and observation questions, methods for answering the questions, your qualifications for applying these methods, the draft of your research results, a call to action/approval, and appendices.

Your memo of transmittal should include your summary of audience.

Your first appendix should be your bibliography. Following the bibliography you must include your resume to document your qualifications and you may include and data gathering tools such as

surveys and interview questions, raw data you collected, including survey results or interview transcripts; correspondence with experts or other students, charts and graphs that informed your results but don't appear in the body of the report, and any other items that you believe provide evidence to support your research results.

The final draft of this assignment is due on **Sunday, October 25 at 11:59 PM.**

Your final draft should have read like a professional report and should have a polished layout. You will add an executive summary after the cover page after you have completed your research results.

Make sure that you remove all comments and notes inserted during peer review and while tracking changes.

Please note that **I do not read or comment on your submitted drafts.** If you wish to consult with me on a draft, please **make an appointment** for on line office hours. **I do not comment on drafts that are emailed.**