

Project One: Literature Review

Introduction/Rationale

When people conduct research in disciplinary and professional contexts, they do so in order to answer questions related to a specific need or problem. Literature reviews, as a research genre, collect, organize and synthesize the relevant secondary research in a systematic way that provides highly condensed and heavily documented information related to your particular question or problem. The primary **purpose** of the review is to provide your audience and/or collaborators with an overview of what experts have said about the problem or research question under investigation. This assignment requires you to move through the messy and recursive stages of researching, analyzing, organizing, and writing in order to draft a formal literature review. Throughout our work on this project, you will have to decide what information from which resources to include in your work. This will also require exercising your critical and creative thinking capabilities to draw parallels and connections between the problem/context of your question and information from the sources you find.

Literature reviews synthesize information, compare and contrast ideas, and clearly describe relationships between well-cited texts so that readers get a sense of a broader conversation and its importance to a particular discourse community. Literature reviews are organized topically with frequent citations and dense prose that is frequently signposted to help readers navigate both conceptual and structural complexity (we will unpack all this - don't worry). Generally, you should show readers how experts have approached the problem or question, what has already been said about it, where contradictions or discrepancies occur, and what still needs to be learned about a topic.

Assignment Prompt

Write a 8-10 page literature review that summarizes and synthesizes the texts that we've read in the first unit on discourse communities, writing expertise, and genres.

To complete this project, we will move through several smaller, yet still formal scaffolding steps. Not only will these steps aid you in successfully researching and writing a literature review for this course and in preparation of the additional writing projects later in the term, but when paired with critical reflection, they will also help you to devise a personal process for researching and writing literature reviews as well as more complex projects with larger stakes. Your literature review should be based on the readings assigned in class. The goal of the project is to build a coherent understanding of the major ideas raised by this body of work. As you work through each text, write a brief summary of the text's main argument, but work to find connections between the texts. The hallmark of a successful literature review is one that combines moments of summary with effective explanation about how the individual texts connect with other texts - or, in other words, moments of synthesis. The final paper for this project will make connections (synthesize) between the texts and will use those connections to define key concepts like writing expertise, discourse community, and genre in ways that can help you begin primary research in your target professional field.

Minimum Requirements

Each step in the process will include more specific instruction to help guide you through the process safely and securely. Such instructions will include more thorough descriptions, research and writing tips, structural guides, and examples for your reference. Below, I have listed the minimum requirements for submission, which means that if your project meets all of the conditions, it will be accepted and its quality will be assessed for a grade.

- Invention Portfolio: Annotations of the articles, and any work you completed to produce this draft
- Literature Review including at least 6 texts from the assigned readings
- Appropriate disciplinary/professional formatting (e.g., MLA, APA, etc.)
- 8-10 pages (approx. 2,000 - 2,500 words) excluding works cited, double spaced
- Correct in-text and bibliographic citation of at least 6 scholarly sources
- Section headings that organize and sign-post content for readers

Due Date

- First Draft Due: Friday, February 3
- Final Draft Due: Sunday, February 12 before 11:59pm --submit the final draft to me via a link to your Google Doc in a Direct Message in Slack

Grading

	Excellent	Acceptab
Basic Content: Meeting Itemized demands of the project as described above. Demonstrating a body of research that is synthesized, developed, and supported with details where appropriate.		
Purpose: The essay serves a clear research purpose and logically leads readers through intellectual moves that support its conclusions		
Audience: Addresses a clear and authentic of audience. Situates the essay in ongoing professional/academic conversations.		
Organization: The essay establishes clear relationships between the various sources AND the structural parts of the essay. The introduction establishes an exigence and guiding questions. Transitions between paragraphs and sections guide readers in understanding the scholarly conversation.		
Clarity: Sentences exhibit clear meaning that is easy to read		
Presentation/Professionalism: Attention to timeliness, scaffolding, and submission protocols. The essay demonstrates academically acceptable Standard Written English, exhibits a minimum of grammatical or structural errors, and meets the basic formatting guidelines for the discourse community it is intended to serve.		

Learning Objectives

- Develop advanced reading strategies (i.e. skimming, key word recognition, selective reading) to evaluate and choose secondary sources for further reading
- Use information visualization and/or citation management strategies to track and organize larger disciplinary/professional conversations about a topic of interest.
- Deploy a flexible process for planning, drafting, and revising that responds to the rhetorical contexts of different writing situations in academic and professional discourse communities
- Emulate genre conventions of Literature Reviews such as synthesizing multiple sources, situating diverse perspectives, and reproducing the stylistic, formatting, and citation practices of specific academic/professional discourse communities
- Use advanced Boolean search protocols and keywords strategies to navigate library research tools, article databases, and other scholarly/professional knowledge-bases in order to address clearly defined questions or problems of interest
- Deploy a formal process for defining and revising a specific topic of inquiry (question or problem), research goals (outcomes and artifacts) as well as various ways of addressing those inquiries (methods and solutions).
- Identify and emulate diverse research genres such as annotated bibliographies, research journals, and literature reviews
- Plan and evaluate appropriate procedures for researching and writing about topics of inquiry for professional/academic audiences
- Identify and implement needed adjustments to research and writing processes and products
- Describe, with predicted examples, how skills, procedures, and knowledge acquired in this unit might apply to future contexts