



Project 1: Keyword Project

During the next couple of weeks, we'll be familiarizing ourselves with many new and complicated keywords in the field of rhetoric and composition. Along the way, you'll explore one of those keywords in depth. More specifically, you'll create a print text (e.g., a newsletter, a booklet, a pamphlet, a poster) that explicates a keyword in rhetoric and composition for the audience of first-year EWM students (i.e., those taking their first EWM class, not first-year students).

Toward that end, your print text should include an overview of the ways leading scholars and practitioners in the field have defined the keyword and described its purpose and application over time. Put otherwise, you'll want to define the keyword but also speak to its origins and evolution.

To accomplish this, you'll have to do some research. Yes, you can use and draw from the readings we cover in class, but you'll still need to look elsewhere for additional information: in particular, you'll need to draw from at least 2-3 sources not covered in class. Try [Rebecca Moore Howard's Rhet/Comp Bibliography](#) and [CompPile](#), use Google scholar, and/or visit Strozier Library physically or digitally. And you can, of course, always ask me for direction: that is, I can help you locate germane and fruitful texts about your keyword from those in the field. That said, make sure your arguments are *supported* by research, not bogged down by it. In saying this, I'm not suggesting that you shy away from incorporating the work of others; rather, I'm saying that you need to take the time to unpack that work and translate it in a language that is understandable to your novice audience. The work of others should support your argument, not make your argument for you.

In addition to synthesizing what others in the field say about your keyword, you'll want to push yourself and those in the field by questioning and complicating that term. Think of the "questions" portion of the QQC exercise. In what ways do you agree or disagree with current scholars' understandings of your keyword? Offer some complications for your

readers. In short, attempt to articulate the nuance and messiness of what might appear to be a rather simplistic term: it's one thing to comprehend and another to be able to challenge and question in smart ways.

As mentioned, your print text should be geared toward the audience of first-year EWM students. As such, you'll want to write in a way that introduces new students to the keyword in meaningful and clear ways; then, you'll want to apply this keyword to their lives, situations, and studies. Said another way, you'll need to take these keywords out of the "academic language" of the books and articles you have read and make them applicable and understandable to other 20-year-old students. In short, provide some contemporary examples of how the keyword is used that will resonate with your audience and that will underscore the salience of it in successfully navigating diverse rhetorical situations.

Thus, for those who desire more prescription, you'll want to hit the following content areas:

- An **introduction** that identifies and addresses the audience, explains the purpose of the text, and outlines the text's contents.
- A **definition of your keyword**, in your own words, that is substantiated by work from those in the field; included in that definition is the origin of the keyword, the ways in which it has evolved over time, and the relationship it has with other important keywords.
- A **critique of your keyword** that speaks to its nuance and messiness but that also highlights the importance and usefulness of it in different rhetorical situations; draw attention to critical questions/discussions surrounding the keyword.
- A few **contemporary examples** that illustrate how pervasive the keyword is, how the keyword operates in practice, and why the keyword is important to understand as both a consumer and producer of meaning; in addition, make sure to explain the examples you use in full rather than force the audience to tease out how and why they are apt examples.
- A **conclusion** that summarizes the importance of your keyword and that offers additional advice and/or resources.
- A **Works Cited** (or equivalent) page that includes citations for the sources you used (written *and* visual sources). You'll also need to have in-text citations.

The way you attend to each of these content areas will vary depending on the genre in which you're working and the keyword you're tackling. Moreover, you have the agency to add and/or remove content areas as long as you're able to justify those rhetorical decisions.

Finally, think of this print text as a resource you would give students during their first week or two of class. Therefore, not only do the content, research, and style need to match your genre and audience, but so too does the form. Think layout. Think visual rhetoric. Think about how you can make this something other than a 12 pt. Times New Roman handout for students. What kind of layout would draw you in and keep you reading? How can you most

effectively utilize white space, headings, subheadings, images, color schemes, and different typography? Think about what written and visual persuasion might look like together.

Overarching goals:

- Understand a keyword in the field of rhetoric and composition in-depth
- Adapt scholarly research for a novice audience
- Compose effectively in a genre conducive for your rhetorical objective
- Write in a style appropriate for your audience
- Design a text that is visually appealing, easy to navigate, and informative
- Organize your text in a logical, effective, and easy-to-follow manner
- Utilize visuals in a way that collaborate with your writing and typography to create meaning that neither mode of communication could make in isolation

- **Due date: Thursday, October 3rd**

- **Rhetorical Rationale** also required, due **Tuesday, October 8th**