ENG219 Business and Professional Writing

Appendix D: Genre Research Assignment

The following lesson can be delivered in either a face-to-face or online, asynchronous modality. Note: Instructor is open to alternative methods of learning, please contact the instructor for more information at [insert contact information].

# Overview and Purpose:

The following assignment can offered as take home or can be completed during class time. The assignment can be completed in an array of formats: traditional written reflection, video/audio recording, brief presentation, etc.

The purpose of this assignment is to help students develop meaningful and useful ways of approaching writing in new genres, which is common in the workplace where idiosyncratic and business-specific genres often prevail over the more familiar genres taught in Business and Professional Writing courses.

# Research Task:

Instruct students to conduct an internet search for examples of “fact sheets.” Do not provide any additional instruction.

Require students to find what they believe to be an example of an effective fact sheet and an ineffective sheet. Have them bring these documents to class to share and compare. This can also be coordinated in an online discussion forum, with each student posting their good and bad example with an accompanying analysis/explanation.

# Writing Task:

In addition to having students select a good and bad example of this genre, ask students to compile some type of “style guide” or set of guidelines for writing effective fact sheets. This should inspire them to consider the common genre themes seen across their research and samples.

A spin on this assignment asks students to write a “10 Commandments of Fact Sheet Writing,” which is always fun.

# Looking Ahead:

Encourage students to consider what this lesson teaches them about writing in new genres. Ask them to forecast why this might be useful in the workplace.

Incorporating questions about the relationship between audience and genre can also be quite generative.

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