Short Writing Assignment

FS 102
Academic Discourse II: Virtual Pen, Virtual Paper
Spring 2016
Bob Roos
http://cs.allegheny.edu/sites/rroos/fs102s2016

Short Writing Assignment
Due Friday 4 March on your blog and in Sakai Drop Box
Graded

There are four parts to this assignment (but you may not need to do the second one, depending on the current state of your blog).

1. [Critique Other Blogs; Self-Critique Your Own.] In class on Monday we will divide into groups of three students each. Each member of the group should review the blogs of the other two members and provide them with a critique of all aspects of their blog (see below for criteria). This critique should be completed in class on Monday and posted as a comment to the most recent post in the blog under review. If you prefer to do these critiques more privately, you should email your critique to the student in question and Cc: me on your critique. It is important that you complete this by Monday, since your classmates will be using it to guide their responses to the questions that follow.

The self-critique should be handed in on Friday via the Sakai drop box. Your self-critique should address each of the items in the list of qualities that make a blog professional. Here they are, in brief:

- grammar, spelling, and writing style should be excellent
- acknowledge sources (not just images or direct quotes, but ideas)
- include original content (your own ideas)
- clearly distinguish fact from opinion; back up your claims
- appearance of the blog should be clean and appealing

2. [Complete existing posts.] By editing your existing posts, complete all of the currently incomplete entries. This may include supplying written content, images, video, etc. If you are not able to supply the missing content by the assignment deadline, edit or completely re-write the entry so that there is no reference to the missing material.

3. [Add new written content.] Over the course of this week, add at least one, but preferably two or more, substantial entries to your blog. There should be original text in each one (in other words, don’t simply create entries that link to other things or that are nothing but images, sound files, or videos). See the end of this assignment for some suggestions.

4. [Qualities.] With a critical eye, re-read the posts in your personal blog (the one whose address you entered on the spreadsheet at https://goo.gl/HhpvP7). Revise the entries and, if necessary, the appearance of your blog to achieve the qualities listed above.
If you have been having difficulty coming up with material for your blogs, here are some general suggestions:

- **[Meta-blogging.]** This is just “writing about your blogging experience.” Many blog authors occasionally devote an entry to talking about their experiences writing the blog. Here’s an example:


- **[Interlude.]** This can be an interruption to the more usual type of blog entry you write. An “interlude” could be just about anything—things going on in your life, a recent news event, or just a crazy idea you had. Ideally you should find some way to tie it to your blog. If it is not directly relevant to your blog topic, at least it should have some influence on your blogging activity. Here’s an “interlude” I put in my own personal blog:


- **[Defining Terms.]** If your blog assumes a certain amount of understanding of the readers in order to follow your entries, you might consider occasionally posting some help for newbies or others who may not be as familiar with your topic. You could provide some common terms used in your entries, along with their definitions. Or you could provide some history or background to your topic.

- **[Responses to comments.]** While you may often simply respond to comments by writing a return comment, you can also devote a blog entry to answering more substantial questions or comments.