

## Composing Writing Projects

### □ Define the task you want students to take on as writers

What questions and issues do you want students to address as writers? What kinds of materials do you want them to work with? What sort of text (essay, research report, literature review, memo, editorial, poster, slides, talk, etc.) do you expect them to produce?

### □ Explain your purpose and goals

Why are you asking students to take on this project? What do you hope they will learn to do as writers or as apprentice scholars? What makes this an interesting, important, or useful task?

### □ Set a context

#### ○ Intellectual

What sort of public or scholarly conversation are you asking students to enter into? What traditions of inquiry or research do you want them to work within (and perhaps against)?

#### ○ Course

How does this particular piece of writing build on the work that students have been doing, or advance the work they will soon be doing, over the course of the semester?

### □ Clarify procedures and deadlines

What are your expectations concerning length, genre, format, documentation, style? Can you offer examples—written by professionals or by students—of the sorts of texts you'd like students to produce?

What are the key stages of the project? Will there be proposals, drafts, workshops, revisions, presentations? When are the various stages of the project due? Who will respond to each stage and how? How will the project be evaluated? What is its weight in the final grade for the course?

### □ Consider your stance and tone as a writer

#### ○ Vocabulary

What terms do you use to describe the work of your field? How do you describe the work you want students to do? What key terms or concepts do you want them to use?

#### ○ Address to students

What stance do you take towards the readers of your assignment? Do you invite or direct? Suggest or specify? How does your attitude in writing to students compare to the tone you strike in other scholarly or professional work?

#### ○ Persona or style

How do you represent yourself as a writer? A teacher? A member of a discipline? An intellectual? A citizen?