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Taylor Ball

Shawnee State University, ballt2@mymail.shawnee.edu

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**Master of Composition & Rhetoric
Graduate Portfolio**

Taylor Ball

**Shawnee State University
Fall 2023**

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Reflective Introduction

When I first found Shawnee's Online Composition and Rhetoric Program, I thought it was too good to be true. At the time, I was in the midst of a master's program at a different school for a degree I had no interest in ever using – Administration. Despite my desperate search for a master's program that I would enjoy, I had not been able to find one of which my current job would approve. I was driven by a desire to become a fully licensed secondary and university level educator, as opposed to a Middle Childhood licensed teacher assigned to 9th grade Language Arts at a private school. In my excitement, I called Shawnee to get more details on the program, only to be told the program did not exist. Luckily, I eventually connected with the right people who were able to answer my questions and help me begin a two-year journey of pursuing my passion – a master's degree in composition and rhetoric. Through this program, I have changed and matured as an educator, a scholar, and a writer.

I have always felt that my calling as an educator was to help my students become lifelong learners and to create an environment where my students feel comfortable making mistakes from which they can learn (Inoue, 2019). Creating this supportive and safe environment where students are able to experiment and work through their failures has always been a priority for me as an educator. Through this program, however, I have been given new tools and skills through which to accomplish these goals. For example, *The St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing* by Glenn & Goldthwaite (2014) and *Designing Writing Assignments* by Traci Gardner (2008) introduced me to different ways to engage students in writing and pre-writing exercises that are meaningful to them. These resources also stressed the use of strategies to help students become advocates for their own writing needs through conferences, specifically preparing students to take lead of these conferences (Gardner, 2008; Glenn & Goldthwaite, 2014). In the past, I have attempted to use conferences during writing units, but I did not use them effectively. In essence, I did not allow students to have ownership over their writing. Rather, I used the conferences as a time to teach my students what my own writing style and preferences were. After going through multiple courses discussing the use of conferences, I am confident in my abilities to properly facilitate conferencing that allows the student to own and develop their writing.

My view of teaching has also expanded over the course of this program because prior to completing the coursework, my experiences with teaching were limited to the middle school and

secondary classrooms. I believe that considering teaching writing from the perspective of an undergraduate level instructor has not only helped me become a better scholar and writer, but also become a more effective teacher for students at any level. This MA program has challenged me to consider what really matters in teaching and assessing my students. Through study of Asao Inoue's (2019), Brian Huot's (1996), and Maja Wilson's (2017) work on assessment, among others, I've concluded that growth is the most important outcome that my students can achieve. It is for this reason that in my syllabus artifact for this portfolio, I chose to make the final assessment for my hypothetical course a portfolio. I have also come to realize that growth looks different for every student as student differences exist at all levels of education.

As a scholar, and in concert with my values as a teacher, I am interested in sharing knowledge with others. I have always been interested in history, but I rekindled this love through learning about the history of the writing and teaching fields through the writings of James A. Berlin (1987), James A. Herrick (2021), Susan C. Jarratt (1998), and others. I have found that I am also keenly interested in understanding the reason behind why people do things, write things, or say the things that they do. Part of this interest lies in understanding the psychology of people and learning which was addressed in the cognitive and motivational theories course. I have been able to use the information presented by theories like Vygotsky's, Schema, and interference theories to better understand the ways my students' brains work (or malfunction) (Byrnes, 2007). I did have some vague knowledge of these theories prior to studying them in this program, but revisiting the knowledge allowed me to gain a new understanding from the perspective of teaching at a higher level.

I have always believed that, as an educator, one must also be a lifelong learner. For a teacher this means constantly evaluating the practices in one's classroom and educating oneself on the newest research and best practices for the classroom and subject area. The MA program has helped me accomplish these goals and continue to align my values as a scholar with my mission as a teacher. At each step, the program encouraged me to learn more about the elements of composition that interested me most and find ways to incorporate what I learned into my teaching practice. I took the opportunity to research the history of revision for this piece of scholarly writing and in the process, I was able to better understand how I could use revision in my own classroom and in accordance with my values as an educator. Specifically, I have adapted

ideas from Nancy Sommers (1980) and Cheryl Glenn & Melissa Goldthwaite (2014). This fact can be seen in nearly all the artifacts in my portfolio, including my scholarly piece on revision and my syllabus.

As a writer, I prioritize variety and coherence, which necessitates the incorporation of revision in one's writing process. I have always seen writing as a type of puzzle that uses words as its pieces. At times it takes a couple of attempts to find the right piece since many pieces may look as though they fit well, but not perfectly. Once you do find the right piece, the writing both makes sense (coherence) and keeps the reader engaged (variety) while also forming a clear, beautiful picture when looking at the writing as a whole. I have always loved writing. I find that I personally communicate best through writing, and I enjoy being able to share my love of writing with others.

Over the course of the MA program, I have fine-tuned my writing process. For me, this means that I take the time to draft and gradually improve my writing in multiple, recursive stages rather than procrastinating and turning in the first and only draft that I wrote. The majority of this change comes from my new practice of properly revising my writing. Early in the program, I found that I did not really understand what it meant to revise a piece of writing. Even when I taught revision to my students, I struggled to communicate to them how to revise beyond copy-editing errors because for most of my life, that was what I did when I revised. Shawnee's MA program introduced me to the concepts of sophisticated revision, particularly in our study of Nancy Sommers' work on revision, which we were introduced to in multiple courses. As I mentioned earlier, this relates to my scholarly writing piece where I did further research on revision since it was of interest to me.

I have attempted to show these values through my attached teaching materials which include a sample undergraduate introduction course syllabus, a research writing assignment from this syllabus, the assignment's accompanying lesson plans, and a rubric that I would use to assess this assignment.

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Personal Philosophy of Education

My mission as a teacher is to be able to make an impact on students' lives by giving them the necessary tools to help them succeed in whatever they wish to pursue. I believe students need to feel empowered in their education which they can do by taking ownership of their learning. To facilitate this, I try to incorporate student choice in almost every assignment for my classes to reinforce the democratic ethic in the classroom (Gardner, 2008). I take polls on anything from understanding of concepts, preferences for group work vs. individual work, preferences for assessment dates, and even to gain feedback on which activities or content I should keep for the next year and which we should give the boot. This ownership helps students feel confident enough to take risks in the classroom and not be afraid to fail (Inoue, 2019).

In teaching writing, it is my job to help students understand that "failure" is built into the writing process through revision. For this reason, exercises such as peer editing, writing conferences, multiple drafts of writing, and portfolios are built into my courses (Sommers, 1980; Glenn & Goldthwaite, 2014). This approach to teaching writing supports the idea of giving students ownership and a free space to explore and take charge of their learning. Eventually, this habit of taking educational risks in the classroom will translate into a student's daily experiences and begin to make an impact on his or her daily life. The ability to think critically, to be creative in finding solutions to problems, and to lead the way on making change in the world are all qualities I wish to pass along to my students by the time they leave my classroom (Yancey, 1999).

Some days, the students are the experts in the room, and yet other days they are the ones gaining firsthand experiences to learn new material (Huot, 1996). Pedagogically, I prefer to balance a more traditional approach to instruction with practicing the role of facilitator. This method allows students to learn from one another, at times better than they could learn from myself. One method of teaching writing that helps facilitate ownership as well as an environment conducive to trying and failing is modeling (Glenn & Goldthwaite, 2014). Modeling the skills that we expect of our students sets the tone for the classroom environment to be positive and accepting of critiques. When introducing a new skill, such as analyzing a piece of writing for its persuasive devices, I will model the process I expect my students to utilize in front of the class.

Specifically, I have the entire class look at a piece of writing and read it aloud as I vocalize my critiques of the piece and my thoughts on what could be done to improve the piece of writing. Often these pieces are samples from previous students which showcase both strengths and weaknesses in their writing as well as the interests and expertise of the student. After adequate practice, the students are charged with formulating the questions, comments, and observations about a new piece of writing and discuss these with their peers. Not only is this more engaging for students, but it also allows me to assess student understanding in real time as I listen to peer discussions during class. Facilitating these experiences for students helps them to realize mistakes are only steppingstones to success.

While it is important to measure how successfully a student has grasped concepts covered during instruction, it is more effective to do so in a way that tracks progress over time and with a variety of assessments. Focusing on a single point in time to evaluate a student's success may not contain an accurate view of the student's abilities due to any number of factors. Therefore, to get a true sense of the student's abilities and how they have grown, it is best to look at their performance over a longer period of time (Yancey, 1999). This is where portfolios as summative assessments are incredibly useful. As students learn more about writing over the course of the semester, they can return to pieces of writing with new eyes, take the constructive criticism of their peers and instructors, and demonstrate their growth by adjusting the pieces based on their new learning (Glenn & Goldthwaite, 2014). When a teacher can see that students are growing over the time span that they are in her classroom, this is the best way to evaluate that student learning was successful. If students are not being challenged to incorporate their new knowledge, they may not retain their learning and use it to grow to their full potential.

I firmly believe that teaching writing in this way helps students develop the tools necessary to function in the world through resilience and successful communication. To create competent future citizens, we need to focus on helping students practice the skills they will need to research, debate, and make decisions that affect them in real ways. In turn, they will experience these aspects of adult life in authentic ways before the stakes are any higher.

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Scholarly Writing Sample

This piece was first written for the final project in the Rhetoric 6645 course entitled “History & Theory of Composition.” The assignment was originally to describe the origins and evolution of an activity commonly used in composition courses, and I took the opportunity to learn more about revision. My fascination with revision came from the fact that I had not personally been taught much over the course of my education regarding revision. I found that I held many misconceptions about revision and how useful it can be once it is understood beyond “copy-editing.” In reworking this piece for the portfolio, I focused on reorganizing the ideas in a way that showcases what I’ve learned about revision throughout the entire Composition and Rhetoric program as well as how educators might approach the teaching of revision.

A History and Modern Use of Revision in the Composition Classroom

Introduction

In recent years, the “writing process” has become a point of contention when considering the best methods for teaching writing to students. As should be expected in a field as complex and ever-changing as composition, challengers of the “writing process” put forth their concerns about the limits this theory faces. However, scholars have used the “writing process” as a starting point for their most recent theorizing, viewing the “post-process” approach to composition as one that includes and expands upon the original “writing process” from the 80s and 90s (Kent, 12). Because of this, both theories include the recursive practice of revision.

The research is overwhelming as to why revision matters for students of composition. Renowned scholars such as Faigley, Witte, Sommers, and Zamel all agree that ““good writers seem to revise at all stages of the writing process as they generate, reevaluate, reformulate, and refine their writing goals”” (qtd. in Feltham & Sharen, 112). Therefore, while many teachers and students alike admit that revision can be a “slow, arduous, laborious...task,” experts continue to support the use of revision practices in the composition classroom (112). One reason teachers and theorists have identified as a contributing factor in students’ strong distaste for revision comes from a misunderstanding of what revision truly is. Many students seem to think revision is

simply copy-editing, or correcting mechanics, when revision, as defined by Nancy Sommers, is “a sequence of changes in composition, in which ideas, words, and phrases are added, deleted, moved, or changed throughout the writing of the work” (qtd. in Feltham & Sharen, 112). The educator’s job, then, in encouraging revision is to support students throughout their composition writing by providing opportunities and examples of revision best practice.

A Brief History of Revision

These ideas may seem like they align well with recent pedagogical trends, but in reality, the concept of revision has been documented since ancient Roman times as a strategy used by Cicero. Even then, Cicero argued that exchanging writings with friends and suggesting revisions not only improved his writing, but also created stronger social bonds (Gurd, 49). Echoes of these ideas resonate within the works of writing process scholars from the 1970s to the 90s. For example, Ann E. Berthoff in her article “The Problem of Problem Solving” stresses that not only is writing an act that is inextricably linked with society and oneself, but that it can be a “dangerous” political act as well (Berthoff, 176). Berthoff also encourages teachers of writing to revise their thinking about the field of composition and its role in society (Berthoff, 241). Scholars have continued to expand our knowledge in the field by looking at the effects of technology on revision and writing as a social activity. One of the newest schools of thought regarding the “writing process,” the post-process theorists, accept revision as an essential part of writing as well (Dave & Russell, 427).

Writing process theorists placed a renewed emphasis on revision in the 80s and 90s. This belief arose in response to current-traditional rhetorical theory which was, in comparison to the writing process, too “linear” and focused on the “product” of composition (Kent, 14, 45). Rather than treating writing as a “stimulus-response,” process theorists upheld the belief that composition was made of not one singular action, but rather of many activities and choices to be made – in other words, a process (Flowers & Hayes, 366-367; Kent, 47). These changes in thinking about writing attempted to create a model which better represented the actions associated with composition. In other words, “A more accurate model of the composing process would need to recognize those basic thinking processes which unite planning and revision”

(Flowers & Hayes, 367). Flower & Hayes responded to this desire by theorists through their publication of the cognitive process model.

As it happened, the research of Flowers and Hayes came at a time when revision was about to become revolutionized by the computer (Dave & Russell, 407). While the idea of a “draft” originated in the world of the typewriter, it was expanded upon with the advent of the personal computer and the ability to word process one’s writing (407). This may sound like an overall positive outcome for students of the time, but it created a new issue – “word processing increased fluency or verbiage in students’ writing, but did not result in better writing because students lacked ‘the skills to control their new-found fluency’” (409). Ultimately, studies by Hawisher and Hill, Wallace, and Haas found that there was no relationship between using word processing and improved writing (409). Many students found word processing made their revisions easier, but the quality of revisions came down to the skill of the writer, not the tool being used. As more tools for revision become available in the form of new technologies (such as Google Docs, commenting features, and outlining features) which can be used to aid students in their revisions, experts are still not seeing a correlation between the use of these technologies and increased number or quality of revisions (Dave & Russell, 430).

Writing Process Models

Anyone who has taken or taught a composition course in the last 45 years or so has likely heard the term “revision.” Originally coined as “Re-Writing,” revision was seen as the third stage in the cognitive writing process as outlined by Linda Flower and John Hayes in their 1981 article entitled “A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing.” Specifically, they defined revision as “a final reworking of [a written] product” (Flower & Hayes, 367). However, this definition makes it sound as though revision can only happen at the end of the writing process. According to Flower & Hayes, who cite Gordon Rohman in their description of the “stage model,” the writing process consists of three stages – Pre-Writing, Writing, and Re-Writing (Flower & Hayes, 367). Rohman’s conception of these stages was linear, but many scholars and researchers have since questioned this conception since “both common sense and research tell us that writers are constantly planning (pre-writing) and revising (re-writing) as they compose (write), not in clean-cut stages” (Flower & Hayes, 367).

Flower & Hayes also refer to revision as a sub-process under the larger umbrella of “Review” (374). The reason for this is likely because they feel reviewing one’s writing can occur both consciously, such as when looking over a final draft, and as an “unplanned action” prompted by almost anything one sees, hears, or thinks in a day (374). Flower and Hayes make a point to clarify later on in their article that “The sub-processes of revising and evaluating, along with generating, share the special distinction of being able to interrupt any other process and occur at any time in the act of writing” (374). This article became the basis for decades of future work and research on what we now call the “writing process.” Therefore, Flower & Hayes’ cognitive process model, which has become a more popular version of the writing process in modern pedagogy, adjusted the linear stages model into a process model which takes into account the cognitive processes that occur throughout the creation of a product (367). Their intention was to “lay groundwork for more detailed study of thinking processes in writing,” as they were interested in the inner processes involved in both the good and the bad choices writers made (Flower & Hayes, 366).

The cognitive process model satisfied many scholars for a decade or two. However, many challenges were brought against this model. For some, a process model was still too “empirical” for their liking (although, as one author points out, one must use empirical data to come to this conclusion) (Kent, 44). Furthermore, post-process theorists feel that trying to pin down “generalizable,” concrete steps for a writing process is actually impossible work (xi). Instead, they hold three beliefs – “(1) writing is public; (2) writing is interpretive; and (3) writing is situated” (xi). The first of these, that writing is never private, comes from the fact that a writer always has an audience in mind. Secondly, because writing is never private, all aspects of composition involve both the interpretation of text and one’s readers as well. Finally, due to writing being public and the interpretation involved, writers always have a place or position from which they begin writing, and this situation is related to one’s knowledge of others (xii-xiv). These ideas are quite abstract compared to the concrete steps of cognitive process theory, but as one can observe in the historical trends within the composition and rhetoric field, the theories which arise in response to previous beliefs are often incredibly contrary to those which came before (Berlin).

Post-process theorists believe in multiple possible writing processes, whereas cognitive process theorists believe in just one. More specifically, post-process theory states that “no codifiable or generalizable writing process exists or could exist” (Kent, xi). Because of this, revision is acknowledged by post-process theorists as a meaningful practice for many, but not necessary for all. In fact, some theorists maintain that “rapid production [and potentially skipping revision altogether] can sometimes be a virtue as well as a necessity” (Kent, 21). As we are still in the “post-modern” era, research is still being conducted on the different writing processes, including the ways individuals write outside of the classroom (75). This research is further prompted by the increased awareness of the ways in which society has perpetuated discrimination against those who do not conform. Rather than “a compulsion to assert truth,” modern researchers are searching for wider acceptance of “alternate perspectives” (5).

Instructional Implications

In response to this research, teachers need to not only encourage their students to revise, but also give them specific models of revision from which to choose. Models and demonstrations are integral to increasing student use of revision, but post-process theorists would recommend also allowing students to experiment with multiple modes of revision to help them find the one that works best for their purposes (Kent, 20). While technology can aid in revision for some, for others it is completely unnecessary when one has access to paper and pencil (Dave & Russell, 429). For this reason, it is also beneficial for students to sometimes adhere to tried and true methods of revision, considering they have historically been utilized by experts such as Nancy Sommers and Cheryl Glenn & Melissa Goldthwaite. These practices can include, but are not limited to, conferencing, peer writing workshops, portfolios, and traditional teacher comments (Glenn & Goldthwaite, 120-123). Whatever method of revision students choose, teachers should ensure emphasis is given to both a growth mindset and to the fact that writing is a recursive, or “fluid,” activity that requires the reader to review their writing at multiple points before a final draft is submitted (Feltham & Sharen, 114; Hanson & Rodak, 210).

For these reasons, the use of revision in modern composition courses is essential. However, revision is a difficult concept to teach, and an even more difficult activity to encourage in students. Teachers clearly need to provide both direct instruction prior to writing as well as

guidance to students during writing. It is crucial that students learn and understand the purpose and methods of revision as well as some of the potential stages of one's writing process. These assertions are based on the previously presented research showing that there are many benefits for students who revise their work. Additionally, there are many "real life" applications that make revision an important skill to teach. Teachers can incorporate these real-life scenarios into their instruction in an attempt to resonate with students. Implementing this philosophy on revision and writing processes also might mean that whether students prefer to revise is completely up to them, and many may choose not to. However, demonstrating the practice of revision and exposing them to the different methods for revision and potential steps in writing processes available to them, particularly at the "beginners" level, is an essential part of a composition teacher's job.

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Steve Graham, Jill Fitzgerald, Guilford Press, 2008, pp. 41-53.

Teaching Materials Sample

The sample syllabus provided below was created for the Rhetoric 6615 course entitled “Composition Pedagogy.” The first iteration of the syllabus was created solely based on the suggestions of Glenn & Goldthwaite’s text *The St. Martin’s Guide to Teaching Writing* and formulated using the chosen textbooks. However, as I continued through the program and was introduced to the common standards of the Composition and Rhetoric field, I was able to rework the expectations and assignments to align with these standards and my own developing values as a Composition teacher.

The lesson assignment and lesson plan were an extension of the ideas from the syllabus that were expanded upon in Rhetoric 6620, “Writing Assessment Theory and Practice.” The prompt was intended to engage students in an authentic writing task that tapped into both student interest and student experience. As I was encouraged to expand the lesson further, I found that revision was needed to clarify both the prompt and the assessment criteria. In the end, I feel I was able to use the culmination of my knowledge from the program regarding assessment and writing best practices to create clear artifacts that will engage students in writing tasks that will allow them to meet the course objectives and which are also true to my philosophy as an educator.

ENGL-1105 Course Syllabus

Composition and Argumentation

Professor: Taylor Ball Department: Composition & Rhetoric
Office: 218 Classroom: 140

Office Hours: Tues. 9-10 am; Thurs. 11:15am -1:15pm

Meeting Times: Tues. & Thurs. 10 am – 11:15 am

Phone: 740-123-456 Ext. 22218

Email (Preferred method of contact): ballt2@shawnee.edu

Course Description:

An introduction to argumentation and composition. Students will gain familiarity with the conventions of usage, jargon, format, and documentation in academic disciplines. (Copied from the Shawnee State University Fall 2023-2024 Course Catalog)

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Learn and use key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts
- Gain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes
- Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure
- Use strategies—such as interpretation, synthesis, response, critique, and design/redesign—to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources
- Use composing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts
- Read a diverse range of texts, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and to how these features function for different audiences and situations

- Locate and evaluate (for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, bias and so on) primary and secondary research materials, including journal articles and essays, books, scholarly and professionally established and maintained databases or archives, and informal electronic networks and internet sources
- Develop a writing project through multiple drafts
- Develop flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing
- Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas
- Experience the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- Learn to give and to act on productive feedback to works in progress
- Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities
- Reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence their work

Copied from the WPA Outcome Statements for First-Year Composition (3.0).

In short, this course will engage you in experiences to aid you in successful communication, collaboration, and writing no matter where your future career path may take you.

Textbooks:

The following texts are required for participation in this course.

1. Lunsford, Andrea et al. *Everyone's an Author with Readings*. 4th ed., W.W. Norton, 2023. ISBN 978-1-324-04534-2
 - a. Please purchase [the eBook version directly from the W.W. Norton website](#). The purchase includes The Little Seagull Handbook Fourth Edition eBook, and a subscription to InQuizitive for Writers for \$35.95
 - b. If you prefer to have a physical copy of the book, please purchase [a separate subscription to InQuizitive for Writers](#) through W.W. Norton for \$19.00. Please note that this price gives you access to the materials for 4 years.'
2. Browne, M., and Stuart M. Keeley. *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking*. 12th ed., Pearson, 2018. ISBN-13: 9780137501731
 - a. This book is available as an eBook through Pearson's monthly subscription service which is 10.99 per month . [A physical book can be rented](#) at about the same price - \$49.99.

Other Resources:

Additional readings that will be used to supplement our discussions will be provided digitally on Blackboard.

Blackboard: The University uses Blackboard as their online Learning Management System (LMS). Therefore, all documents for the course will be available both online via Blackboard and in physical copies that will be provided during class. Your assignments must be uploaded to Blackboard by the due date to be considered fully submitted and on time. If you have questions about how to use Blackboard, please contact [Information Technology Services](#) (available 24/7) at (740) 351-3682, or see me during class, after class, or during office hours.

Writing Center: The following information is copied directly from [Shawnee State University's Writing Center webpage](#):

“Shawnee State University Writing Center tutors help students in all majors improve their ability to write. We provide feedback on any kind of assignment at all phases of the writing process. We prioritize helping students learn how to tackle “bigger” concerns such as revising, brainstorming, organizing, and understanding an assignment although we do address punctuation, grammar, format, and other “smaller” issues. We help students not only produce better writing, but also *become better writers*. Students who need peer tutoring are encouraged to stop by or email the Writing Center at ShawneeWC@gmail.com. Students should expect to remain present and engaged with their tutor through the duration of the session.”

I highly recommend taking advantage of the Writing Center tutors as an additional resource to help you revise your writing. Be sure to complete your work early if you wish to utilize the Writing Center.

Course Requirements:

- Students must complete 5 written assignments of 750-1,000 words. These should be word processed and formatted using MLA Guidelines to successfully complete this course. These assignments are as follows:
 - Assignment #1 – Narrative Paper
 - Assignment #2 – Argumentative Paper
 - Assignment #3 – Position Paper
 - Assignment #4 – Analysis Paper
 - Assignment #5 – Review/Proposal/Report Paper

- Revision is essential to both your success in this course and your growth and success as a writer. Therefore, you will revise each writing assignment at least twice before its due date. This means you will make significant adjustments to your piece's organization, style, support, delivery, style, etc. This does NOT mean that you change a few grammatical errors and consider revisions to be complete. Peer review suggestions as well as student-teacher conference discussions will help guide you in your revision. You will save all drafts for future reference, as you are expected to show the development of each piece of writing both when you submit your final draft as well as when you submit your final portfolio project.
- Students must also keep a writing journal throughout the course. This may be a running document online or a paper/pencil notebook, but it must be one, central place where students keep notes, in-class writing, comments, questions, etc. This journal will be checked for participation/completion every 2 weeks, but the content of the journal will not be graded. This is to allow a free and low-pressure for students to explore and formulate their ideas yet ensure full engagement in the class activities.

Course Policies:

Attendance: Attendance is essential to your success in this course due to the collaborative nature of this course. Understandably, things will happen throughout the semester that may prevent you from attending every class. In these cases, please contact me immediately when conflicts arise. However, it is your responsibility as the student to make up any activities missed during class either by attending office hours, scheduling a conference outside of office hours or class time, and/or by asking a friend in class to help you make up the work or discussion. Missing three or more class sessions throughout the semester will end up seriously affecting your abilities to meet the course objectives. If this occurs, I may contact you regarding dropping the course if that is an option.

Tardiness: Prompt arrival in class is also crucial to your success in the course. Any student who is over 10 minutes late to class will be marked as absent. As noted in the attendance policy, it is the student's responsibility to make up any activities missed during the part of class that was missed either by attending office hours, scheduling a conference outside of office hours or class time, and/or by asking a friend in class to help you make up the work or discussion. If tardiness becomes a consistent issue, and no effort has been made to discuss with me any difficulties leading to consistent tardiness, I may contact you regarding dropping the course if that is an option.

Participation: Success in this course is not possible without in-class participation. In-class discussions, essay critiques, student-teacher conferences, and peer writing group activities will occur in class and your participation in these activities will help you gain the skills and achieve

the objectives of the course. Additionally, assignments such as pre-writing activities and in-class writing will count toward students' grades when submitted along with corresponding essays and the final portfolio.

Late Papers: Late assignments will be accepted up to one week after the due date. Each day that an assignment is late, 10% will be deducted from the final grade that the paper earned. To earn full points on the final assessment - the portfolio - all assignments must be included. Therefore, it is essential to keep up on the assignments as they are given. Any difficulties need to be discussed with me as soon as possible.

Style of Papers: Please word process all assignments using Google Docs or Microsoft Word Online and adhere to the guidelines of the MLA 9th Edition Handbook. Utilize Purdue Owl's MLA Style Guide online to help you accomplish this.

Assignment Submissions: Submit all assignments to Blackboard by the beginning of class on the day that each assignment is due (by 10 am). You will share copies of your essays with your peer writing groups as directed and these will change every few weeks. If you do not have a personal device, such as a personal laptop, with which to bring and share digital copies of your essays every week, please make arrangements to print copies of your essay drafts to share with your peer writing group members each class.

Reminders: Please ensure that your cell phones, watches, and any other personal devices are silenced before attending class. Technology is a normal part of our lives, but in adhering to this rule, you prevent it from becoming a distraction to yourself or others in the classroom.

University Policies:

Plagiarism/Academic Honesty Policy: Students at Shawnee State University are required to do their own work on all tests and assignments. Any form of cheating may result in your being withdrawn from a particular course or courses and a failing course grade, as well as possible dismissal from the University. For a full description of the procedures surrounding Academic Misconduct (including plagiarism or cheating) please read through Section VII of [The Student Conduct Code](#) which is developed by the Dean of Students.

ADA Statement: Any student who believes s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should first contact a Coordinator in the Office of Accessibility Services, Hatcher Hall, 740-351-3106 to schedule a meeting to identify potential reasonable accommodation(s). Students are strongly encouraged to initiate the accommodation process in the early part of the semester or as soon as the need is recognized. After meeting with the Coordinator, students are then required to meet with their instructors during the instructors'

office hours to discuss their specific needs related to their disability. The accommodation letter will be sent to the instructor and student via email prior to the semester start date. Any questions regarding the accommodations on the letter should be addressed to the Coordinator of Accessibility Services. If a student does not make a timely request for disability accommodations and/or fails to meet with the Coordinator of Accessibility Services and the instructor, a reasonable accommodation might not be able to be provided.

Grading Procedures:

Your 5 major writing assignments in this class will be graded initially based on a one-point rubric, a sample of which is attached below. This rubric takes into consideration your attempts to accomplish the skills we study throughout the course. The criteria will include: content, organization, support, delivery, style, and pre-writing activities. The exact criteria for each initial assignment will change based on the requirements of the genre involved, and a copy of the rubric will be provided along with each assignment's instructions.

Much of your final grade will be determined by the final portfolio. This portfolio will give you the opportunity to revise all of your assignments from the semester one final time and to demonstrate your growth in your writing abilities from the beginning of the course to the end.

Evaluation Criteria:

Assignments will be evaluated based on the following one-point rubric. To earn full points on the rubric, your paper must fulfill all elements outlined by each criteria box:

Assessment Instrument:

Concerns <i>Areas that Need Work</i>	Criteria <i>Standards for This Performance</i>	Advanced <i>Evidence of Exceeding Standards</i>
	Content & Organization: The author's position is articulated using one of the methods appropriate to the assignment. The author attempted to incorporate their own ideas throughout the essay as a balance to their research.	

	Research & Support: The author conducted research on their chosen topic and chose 2-3 sources with which to support the chosen position throughout the piece.	
	Genre & Audience: The reader can tell through context clues and word choice that the piece was written with the specified genre and audience in mind - a position statement presented to someone attempting to make the same decision. The author chose a position from their past life experience and attempted to defend their chosen stance.	
	Pre-Writing: The author must also include copies of all pre-writing activities conducted throughout the assignment including, but not limited to: brainstorming, free-writes, outlines, research notes, conference preparation question sheets, peer writing group notes, and rough drafts. These pre-writing activities are submitted along with the final draft by the due date.	

Final Grade Breakdown:

- Course Writing Journal (5%)
- Writing Assignments (25%)
- Reflection Papers (10%)
- Class Participation (10%)
- Final Portfolio (50%)

Class Meetings:

Our class meets for the next 16 weeks (beginning August 23rd and ending December 8th), every Tuesday and Thursday for 75 minutes (from 10:00am to 11:15 am).

All meetings/extra events that we will have throughout the course will occur during this time period and on these two days of the week. The only exceptions to this would be if you need to make up a missed class or if the University is closed. Writing Center visits are not included in our classes, and they are not required for passing the course, but they are highly encouraged when you are able to attend!

Dates below are subject to change. For the most up-to-date calendar, please refer to the course's Blackboard page.

Course Schedule

Meeting Dates	Readings to do BEFORE TODAY'S CLASS	Assignments Due TODAY	Class Activities
Tuesday, August 23 rd	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Introduction: Is Everyone an Author? Ch. 1: Thinking Rhetorically Ch. 2: Engaging Respectfully with Others Ch. 3: Rhetorical Situations	None	Syllabus Review Icebreaker Game Getting to Know You Discuss Diagnostic Essay Questions
Thursday, August 25 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 28: MLA Style Ch. 6: Reading Rhetorically <i>Asking the Right Questions</i> Ch. 1: The Benefit and Manner of Asking the Right Questions	None	Questions on Reading Diagnostic Essay

Tuesday, August 30 th	<i>Everyone's an Author –</i> Ch. 34: Designing What You Write <i>Asking the Right Questions</i> Ch. 2: What Are the Issue and the Conclusion?	None	Introduce Assignment #1 Brainstorm Class Model Brainstorm Practice in Journal Return Diagnostic Essays
Thursday, September 1 st	<i>Everyone's an Author -</i> Ch. 9: Managing the Writing Process Ch. 10: The Need for Collaboration Ch. 13: Writing a Narrative	Brainstorm Activity for Assignment #1	New Peer Writing Groups Today! Evaluate Model Essays Class Discussion Sign Up for Next Thursday's Conferences
Tuesday, September 6 th	<i>Everyone's an Author -</i> Ch. 7: Annotating, Summarizing, Responding <i>Asking the Right Questions</i> Ch. 3: What Are the Reasons?	First draft of Assignment #1	Peer Writing Workshop Critique Partner's Essays Discuss Outline Discuss Conference Prep Questions
Thursday, September 8 th	<i>Asking the Right Questions</i> Ch. 4: What Words or Phrases Are Ambiguous? Ch. 5: What Are the Value and Descriptive Assumptions	Revised first draft for Assignment #1 Sentence Outline Conference Preparation Question Sheet	Student Teacher Conferences Sentence Outline Cut/Paste Activity Work on Final Draft

Tuesday, September 13 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 20: Starting Your Research/Joining the Conversation Ch. 21: Finding Sources/Online, at the Library, In the Field “Technology and Society: How Technology Changed Our Lives” by DJ Wardynski	Final Draft of Assignment #1	Collect Final Drafts (Remind to Submit) Discuss Reflection Papers Introduce Assignment #2 Article Discussion Class Brainstorm Model
Thursday, September 15 th MEET IN LIBRARY	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> - Ch. 8: Distinguishing Facts from Misinformation Ch. 18: Analyzing and Constructing Arguments	Reflection Paper on Assignment #1 Brainstorm Activity for Assignment #2	Research Presentation Begin Research @ Library Take notes on articles in Journal
Tuesday, September 20 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 22: Keeping Track / Managing Information Overload Ch. 23: Evaluating Sources <i>Asking the Right Questions</i> – Ch. 8: How Good Is the Evidence: Personal Observation and Research Studies?	Finish research (between 5-7 sources) and notes on each source	Peer Writing Groups Evaluate Model Essays Class Discussion Sign Up for Next Thursday's Conferences
Thursday, September 22 nd	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 19: Strategies for Supporting an Argument Ch. 25: Synthesizing Ideas	First draft of Assignment #2	Peer Writing Workshop Journal Prompt Critique Partner's Essays

Tuesday, September 27 th	<i>Asking the Right Questions</i> Ch. 6: Are There Any Fallacies in the Reasoning? Ch. 7: The Worth of Personal Experience, Case Examples, Testimonials, and Statements of Authority	Revised first draft of Assignment #2 Sentence Outline Conference Preparation Question Sheet	Student Teacher Conferences Sentence Outline Cut/Paste Activity Work on Final Draft
Thursday, September 29 th	<i>Everyone's an Author –</i> Ch. 26: Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing Ch. 27: Giving Credit, Avoiding Plagiarism	Final Draft of Assignment #2	Collect Final Drafts (Remind to Submit) Introduce Assignment #3 Reading Discussion Journal Prompt Class Brainstorm Model
Tuesday, October 4 th MEET IN LIBRARY	<i>Everyone's an Author -</i> Ch. 12: Arguing a Position <i>Asking the Right Questions –</i> Ch. 9: Are There Rival Causes?	Reflection Paper on Assignment #2 Brainstorm Activity for Assignment #3	Begin Research @ Library Take notes on articles in Journal
Thursday, October 6 th	NO CLASSES	None	FALL BREAK
Tuesday, October 11 th	<i>Asking the Right Questions –</i> Ch. 10: Are Any Statistics Deceptive?	Finish research (between 5-7 sources) and notes on each source	New Peer Writing Groups! Evaluate Model Essays Class Discussion Sign Up for Next Tuesday's Conferences

Thursday, October 13 th	<i>Asking the Right Questions</i> – Ch. 11: What Significant Information Is Omitted?	First draft of Assignment #3	Peer Writing Workshop Journal Prompt Critique Partner's Essays
Tuesday, October 18 th	<i>Asking the Right Questions</i> – Ch. 12: What Reasonable Conclusions are Possible?	Revised first draft of Assignment #3 Sentence Outline Conference Preparation Question Sheet	Student Teacher Conferences Sentence Outline Cut/Paste Activity Work on Final Draft
Thursday, October 20 th	<i>Asking the Right Questions</i> – Ch. 13: Speedbumps Interfering with Your Critical Thinking	Final Draft of Assignment #3	Collect Final Drafts (Remind to Submit) Introduce Assignment #4 Reading Discussion Journal Prompt Class Brainstorm Model
Tuesday, October 25 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 14: Writing Analytically	Reflection Paper on Assignment #3 Brainstorm Activity for Assignment #4	Peer Writing Groups Evaluate Model Essays Class Discussion Sign Up for Next Tuesday's Conferences

Thursday, October 27 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 30: What's Your Style?	First draft of Assignment #4	Peer Writing Workshop Journal Prompt Critique Partner's Essays
Tuesday, November 1 st	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 11: Choosing Genres Ch. 17: Making a Proposal	Revised first draft of Assignment #4 Sentence Outline Conference Preparation Question Sheet	Student Teacher Conferences Sentence Outline Cut/Paste Activity Work on Final Draft
Thursday, November 3 rd	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 16: Writing a Review	Final Draft of Assignment #4	Collect Final Drafts (Remind to Submit) Introduce Assignment #5 Reading Discussion Journal Prompt Class Brainstorm Model
Tuesday, November 8 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 15: Reporting Information	Reflection Paper on Assignment #4 Brainstorm Activity for Assignment #5	New Peer Writing Groups Today! Evaluate Model Essays Class Discussion Sign Up for Next Tuesday's Conferences

Thursday, November 10 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 31: Mixing Languages and Dialects Ch. 32: How to Craft Good Sentences	First draft of Assignment #5	Peer Writing Workshop Journal Prompt Critique Partner's Essays
Tuesday, November 15 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 35: Writing in Multiple Modes Ch. 38: Publishing Your Writing	Revised first draft of Assignment #5 Sentence Outline Conference Preparation Question Sheet	Student Teacher Conferences Sentence Outline Cut/Paste Activity Work on Final Draft
Thursday, November 17 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> - Ch. 5: Writing and Rhetoric in the Workplace	Final Draft of Assignment #5	Collect Final Drafts (Remind to Submit) Review requirements for portfolio Journal Prompt Discuss Reading
Tuesday, November 22 nd	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 37: Assembling a Portfolio	Reflection Paper on Assignment #5	Journal Prompt Discuss Reading Questions? Sign Up for Next Tuesday's Conferences Portfolio Work Time
Thursday, November 24 th	NO CLASSES	None	THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, November 29 th	<i>Everyone's an Author</i> – Ch. 33: Editing the Errors that Matter	Rough Draft of Portfolio for Critique	Peer Writing Groups Portfolio Review Conferences
Thursday, December 1 st	None	Rough Draft of Portfolio for Critique	Peer Writing Groups Portfolio Review Conferences as needed
Tuesday, December 6 th	NO CLASS – EXAM WEEK	None	Work on Final Portfolio Assignment
Thursday, December 8 th	None	Final Portfolio Due!	Collect Final Portfolios Course Evaluations

Sample Assignment

Assignment #3 Prompt:

For this assignment, you will create an artifact which fulfills the definition of a position statement (see *Everyone's an Author* - Ch. 12 for more details). Your position statement should be a minimum of 750 words, approximately 3 double spaced pages. You are also required to utilize at least 3 credible sources to help you support your position. Use the following prompt to get you started:

Consider a time when you made a decision or took an action that you either regret or you were told by someone that it was the wrong decision/action. While this should be a decision that was meaningful to you and your life, it does NOT have to be something very serious. Please be conscious of the fact that you will be presenting this decision to your classmates and to myself. Please refrain from discussing anything that I, as a mandated reporter, would have to report to the appropriate authorities (any illegal activities, potential abuse, etc.***).

You will either defend yourself to someone who is trying to make the same decision for themselves or convince them to take the opposite path than you did. Create a position statement directed to this person of your current position on the decision/action at hand.

Assessment Instrument:

Concerns <i>Areas that Need Work</i>	Criteria <i>Standards for This Performance</i>	Advanced <i>Evidence of Exceeding Standards</i>
	Content & Organization: The author's position is articulated using one of the methods appropriate to the assignment. The author attempted to incorporate their own ideas throughout the essay as a balance to their research.	

	Research & Support: The author conducted research on their chosen topic and chose at least 3 sources with which to support the chosen position throughout the piece. At least 2 of the sources are scholarly, peer-reviewed articles.	
	Genre & Audience: Meaning is clear to the reader through context clues and word choice that the piece was written with the specified genre and audience in mind - a position statement presented to someone attempting to make the same decision. The author chose a position from their past life experience and attempted to defend their chosen stance.	
	Pre-Writing: The author has also submitted copies of all pre-writing activities from the assignment (hard copy or digital) including, but not limited to: brainstorm, free-writes, outlines, research notes, conference preparation question sheets, peer writing group notes, and rough drafts. These pre-writing activities were submitted by the due date.	

*** If you are experiencing, or have experienced, anything that could be considered abuse or a traumatic situation, please refer to the syllabus for information on resources that Shawnee State offers for its students to help them work through those situations.

Sample Lesson Plan

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this assignment, students will be able to...

1. Conduct research on a chosen topic
2. Defend a position on a chosen topic
3. Compose an artifact which incorporates one's own ideas as well as the ideas found in one's research.

Day 1: Pre-Writing/Introduction:

1. Attendance/Collect Final Drafts of Assignment #2 (5 min)
 - a. Reminder to submit online as well
2. Write in Journal (10 minutes)
 - a. Prompt: What is a "position" paper? Have you written one before? If so, what was it about? If not, what do you believe it is, based on context?
 - b. Share answers (5 min max)
3. Discuss Ch. 26 & 27 of *Everyone's an Author*. (20 min max)
 - a. Begin with student questions, comments from journal notes
 - b. MUST be discussed:
 - i. Plagiarism – what is it, common mistakes
 - ii. Expectations for quoting & paraphrasing in this class (MLA style, Works Cited, etc.)
 - iii. Cultural differences in attitudes toward plagiarism.
4. Introduce Assignment #3 (5-10 min)
 - a. Pass out paper copy
 - b. Discuss prompt – mention readings for next class
 - c. Answer questions
5. Model Brainstorming (Whole Class – 25-30 min)
 - a. Conduct class discussion on student knowledge regarding brainstorming
 - b. Use prompt for Assignment #3 and talk through metacognition of a brainstorm model aloud. Answer questions as they arise.

- c. Give students 3 sample prompts with which to practice brainstorming for a potential essay
- d. Allow students to begin their brainstorm if time

Day 2: Research Day – Meet in Library!

1. Attendance/Collect Assignments (5 min)
 - a. Brainstorm & Reflection #2 Due
 - b. Remind to submit online
2. Take questions regarding reading or assignment #3 (5 min)
3. Explain the task of the day – research (5 min)
 - a. Students will have the entire class to complete research for assignment #3
 - b. Expectations –
 - i. find 5-7 reliable sources before next class (remind students what constitutes a reliable source from previous units)
 - ii. Take notes on articles found in writing journal
 - iii. Ask questions!!
4. Research Time (60 min)
 - a. Circulate the lab to ensure students are on the right track
 - b. Answer questions as needed

Day 3: Model Essay Evaluation

1. Attendance/Submit work due (5 min)
 - a. 5-7 sources and notes on each
 - b. Remind to submit online
2. Class discussion – Ch. 12 in *Everyone's an Author* and Ch. 9 in *Asking the Right Questions* (15-20 min)
 - a. Begin with student questions, comments from journal notes
 - b. MUST be discussed:
 - i. What is the purpose of a position paper?
 - ii. How do we choose reliable sources?
 - iii. How do we use differing positions to make our position stronger?

- iv. What are some of the pitfalls of a position paper?
- 3. Assign new peer writing groups – groups of 3 (5 min)
- 4. Evaluate model essays for assignment #3 (30 minutes)
 - a. Review expectations for peer review group work
 - i. One member keeps the discussion on task, but all are expected to participate
 - ii. One member submits the group's work at the end of class, but all are expected to take notes on each essay
 - iii. One member is assigned to be the spokesperson for the group during class discussion.
 - b. Give each group 3 anonymous essays
 - c. Allow students time to read and discuss strengths and weaknesses of each
- 5. Class discussion #2: Each group shares out (10 min)
- 6. Sign up for next week's one-on-one conferences (5 min)

Day 4: Peer Writing Workshop

- 1. Attendance/Submit work due (5 min)
 - a. Rough draft of assignment #3 needs to be on desk
 - b. Remind to submit online as well
- 2. Write in journal (10 min)
 - a. Prompt: Reflect on your research experience for assignment #3. Are there any areas of your paper that you need help with? What areas do you think are strongest? Weakest? How can your peer reviewer help you most?
- 3. Class discussion – Ch. 10 & 11 in *in Asking the Right Questions* (15-20 min)
 - a. Begin with student questions, comments from journal notes
 - b. MUST be discussed:
 - i. Evaluating statistics
 - ii. What questions should one ask after reading an article?
- 4. Peer essay review
 - a. Students are assigned a classmate with whom they will swap essays

- b. Using today's journal prompt, students will preface the reading of their essay with any concerns or questions they have for their peer reviewer. (5 min)
 - c. The next 15 minutes are for reading through the essays and marking as needed.
 - d. The last 15 minutes are for discussion – each partner should take time to discuss their thoughts and suggestions for their partner's essay.
 - e. Teacher will be circulating to answer questions
5. Debrief (5 min) - teacher will address any questions that came up multiple times and open the floor for further questions before dismissal. Reminder that conference preparation questions are due next class.

Day 5: Sentence Outline/Conferences

- 1. Attendance/Submit work due (5 min)
 - a. Revised first draft of assignment #3 needs to be on desk
 - b. Remind to submit online as well
 - c. Conference preparation questions should be answered and ready for use during conferences
- 2. Class discussion – Ch. 12 in *in Asking the Right Questions* (10-15 min)
 - a. Begin with student questions, comments from journal notes
 - b. MUST be discussed:
 - i. What is a reasonable conclusion?
- 3. Cut/Paste Student Outline Activity (50 min)
 - a. While students are waiting for their conference time, they will work on their sentence outlines for this draft of assignment #3
 - b. (I forget what this assignment is – I need to look it up)
- 4. One-on-one conferences (50 min)
 - a. At the assigned time, students will discuss their drafts with the professor.
 - b. Students will have questions for conference prep completed ahead of time to lead the discussion
 - c. Some conferences will be conducted during office hours before class and after class if needed.
- 5. Debrief (5 min)

- a. Clean up from Student Outline activity
- b. Take questions on assignment #3
- c. Reminder that assignment is due by next class

Day 6: Final Draft Due/Pre-Writing

1. Attendance/Collect Final Drafts of Assignment #3 (5 min)
 - a. Reminder to submit online as well
2. Write in Journal (10 minutes)
 - a. Prompt: What does it mean to “analyze?” Have you written an analysis paper before? If so, what was it about? If not, what do you believe it is, based on context? Share answers (5 min max)
3. Discuss Ch. 13 of *Asking the Right Questions*. (20 min max)
 - a. Begin with student questions, comments from journal notes
 - b. MUST be discussed:
 - i. What is critical thinking?
 - ii. What obstacles do we encounter when we try to think critically?
 - iii. Why is it important to overcome these obstacles to critical thinking?
4. Introduce Assignment #4 (5-10 min)
 - e. Pass out paper copy
 - f. Discuss prompt – mention readings for next class
 - g. Answer questions
6. Model Brainstorming (Whole Class – 25-30 min)
 - a. In reading journal, have students copy down model brainstorm
 - b. Use prompt for Assignment #4 and talk through metacognition aloud
 - c. Answer questions
 - d. Allow students to begin their brainstorm if time