Comparative Genre Assignment Sequence

**Overview:**

Comparative genre analysis asks you to compare writing styles in different genres to identify commonalities and differences between the disciplines. For instance, although scholarly articles in literature and anthropology may seem to have nothing in common, there are many similarities. Understanding reasons for differences will help you with your own writing both in college and your career. Most importantly, it will help you apply what you learn in this course to your future writing.

In this unit you will read/skim four scholarly articles from the following disciplines: biochemistry, literature, history and psychology. For each article, you will identify how it uses different writing elements, including evidence, organization and citations.

**Written Tasks Outside of Class:**

* Using the worksheet on the last page of this sequence, take notes on how each article uses elements of writing that you identify. Worksheet is due by **11:55 PM on Tuesday, 10/10.**
* CGA Reflection Letter due by **11:55 PM on Sunday, 10/15.**

Comparative Genre Analysis Notes

Prior to class, please read/skim (or re-read) the following articles:

* “Efficacy and Safety of the mRNA-1273 SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine” by L.R. Baden et al (Medicine)
* “In the South Pain is Segregated: Waiting Rooms and Medical Ethics in Eudora Welty’s “A Worn Path” and Ernest Gaines’s “The Sky is Gray” by Adrienne Akins Warfield (Literature)
* “Smallpox Denaturalized, Demonized, and Eradicable” by Bob H. Reinhardt (History)
* “Parent psychology and the decision to delay childhood vaccination” by T Timothy Callaghan, Matthew Motta, Steven Sylvester, Kristin Lunz Trujillo and Christine Crudo Blackburn (Psychology)

It is not necessary to read each paper really closely – your task with these papers won’t be to fully understand every detail or to even include these papers in your essay writing. The goal instead is to pay attention to aspects of the writing: how do the writers communicate their argument, what genre-specific styles exist, what similarities and differences do you notice, etc.?

Please come to class with a *general* idea of what the articles are about and what they are trying to do. Using the template on the following page, take notes on what you notice regarding the elements of writing.

**Take notes for all four articles on the worksheet on the following page. Worksheet is due on Tuesday, 10/10 by 11:55 PM.**

Worksheet for notes on articles. Notes should address: style (formal/informal), citations, structure, other writing Elements (e.g., thesis, evidence, analysis), etc…

Medicine:

Literature:

History:

Psychology:

Comparative Genre Analysis (CGA) Reflection Letter

As we’ve learned over the past week, scholars from various disciplines make different choices when writing. These choices aren’t random but reflect what people value in their writing. For example, evidence relies on the type of information that makes up a discipline. In science, this evidence is empirical papers and data; in history, evidence includes a range of primary sources (e.g., newspapers, zines, interviews, and other archived documents, etc.); in English, evidence may come from a single poem or novel. Having an awareness of how different genres approach writing will help you better understand what you read. It will also help you have more awareness of your own writing in the future.

Please contemplate writing across the disciplines in an approximately 1-page, single spaced reflection. In your reflection, please consider the following questions (or anything else that feels important to you regarding CGA):

·      What do you think is most important for scholars to consider when deciding how to present their ideas in their writing?

·      In what ways has the CGA exercise made you more aware of disciplinary differences in writing?

·      Given that we have only examined four disciplines in our analysis, how will you approach writing in other disciplines (e.g., international relations, business, economics, etc.) in the future? This could be writing in a class, for your senior thesis, or even in a future job.

·      What questions will you want to ask in future classes so that your work reflects the expectations of that discipline?

**Due: Sunday, 10/15 by 11:55 PM**

*Student Quote: “The comparative genre analysis reflection was an enlightening assignment which broadened my understanding of professional style writing. Through this assignment I have created opinions on what is most important to writers when presenting ideas and how this assignment and the knowledge I gained from it can help me in the future.”*