Examine a Case: modern learning and requirements

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General Instructions

1. For each page, synthesize the reading and research by writing in complete sentences in essay format.
   a. Use the green instructions in the notes below each page to focus your research and writing.
   b. Write about each question, prompt, or process provided in those notes.
   c. Write a full page of text with lots of detail (about 270 words).
      i. Don’t generalize so much that your writing is devoid of detail.
      ii. Don’t repeat yourself.
   d. Cite each source by adding a hyperlink in the Title of the Article or law.
   e. Do not change the template:
      i. Text must be 14 point Lato left-justified type.
      ii. Refrain from adding extra margins or double spacing.
      iii. Do not bullet the paragraphs. Write in essay format only.
   f. Add additional pages if you need more room.

2. Add all sources to the Bibliography page.
   a. Include author, year, title, publisher, and URL.
   b. Number or bullet them using the list button.

When in doubt, write to the instructor for clarification using the Canvas Inbox.
Synthesis Writing

Synthesis is portrayed by Sandra in her post “Resources for Writers: Synthesis Writing” to be an encompassing idea for the collecting and ordering of information, usually in the pursuit of creating some sort of unique thesis using multiple sources. Sandra makes the distinction rather blurry with her introduction of “background synthesis” which claims to be divorced from the creation of a thesis in the pure notion. (Sandra, 1999) This being said, synthesis is something we do in our everyday life whenever we form a semi-informed opinion on a topic. The video “Synthesizing Information” brought forward the example of creating (or synthesizing) an opinion on a movie through categorizing information gained through reviews or conversation regarding the film.

Synthesis in writing also serves to elucidate connections and ideas from a series of sources hopefully in a way the reader may not have thought of before (Sandra, 1999) When preliminary synthesis is completed, often a main thesis is created by matching patterns across the sources. Dependant on the strength of the thesis put forward, argumentation and organization of synthesized information often varies. Sandra provides an example of this through two different articles, one with a weak thesis and one with a strong. (Sandra, 1999) She suggests that a stronger thesis may represent synthesis with a multifactored analysis or contrasting viewpoints where a weaker thesis may skip over differing arguments (Sandra, 1999).
Writing Requirements

When creating slides for this class, students are given a template to follow. These templates provide additional information about the topic such as key search terms, and outlines for material. Often this material is meant to elicit deeper thinking and exploration into a topic. Additional information about the structure of the slides can be found in the rubric on canvas. To receive full credit on an assignment, students should write in their own words and in an essay format.

In addition to these requirements, students must follow a strict format for their text, citations, and content. Alongside the essay format, students must write approximately 270 words (roughly a page) of non-bulleted information. Students will provide information in as much of a culturally agnostic way as possible, making sure to write to a global audience. In addition, students will write in the “third-person, active voice” and may be penalized for writing in the first person when not explicitly asked for. Akin to all writing at the university, students’ writing must be free of spelling and grammar errors, and free of repetitious or fluffy writing.

Submitted assignments must be in 14pt Lato font, be flush with the left side of the paper; however the templates for the files already have this form. The final requirement is that all information taken directly from another source, even if paraphrased, should be accompanied by an in-text citation along with a hyperlink to the article, paper, or video when possible. All references to that source following should be followed by a quick citation including the authors’ names and year of publication. The complete list of citations will end up on the bibliography page.
Modern Learning

Richard Baraniuk in his Ted Talk *The Birth of the Open-Source Learning Revolution* talked about the spread of information and open-source knowledge. Baraniuk expands this idea into “create, rip, mix, and burn” where the learning experience is able to be customized for the individual or culture in which it’s presented. (Baraniuk, 2006) Baraniuk explains burning information as transforming the digital knowledge and representation into a physical form. This physical media can minimize the cost to students and users of the data and allow for sharing information to regions that may not have access to the internet sources where the data is hosted. This new form of learning makes the knowledge more accessible and tailored to everyone (Baraniuk, 2006). In their paper *Designing for Productive Failure*, Manu Kapur and Katerine Bielaczyc report that students, when encouraged to use collaborative learning and problem solving methods in lieu of structured student-teacher methods, may fail in the short term with complex problems, succeed in higher numbers on standardized tests as well as graphical questions. This lead to the idea of productive failure as a learning tool and a tool for continued research (Kapur, 2011) Another form of learning is introduced in the form of Minimally Invasive Education by Sugata Mitra in his Ted Talk *Kids Can Teach Themselves* in which instead of facilitated learning through traditional classroom environments, he supplied the idea of supplementing the learning with self organized learning. Mitra noticed that children were able to teach themselves a lot of information through self facilitated learning, but noted that although the learning was not tied directly to intelligence, was rather tied to the group. This meant that children could not reach the same level of learning alone, but when presented with the information as a group, could teach themselves an abundance of information. (Mitra, 2007)
The New Zealand government released a paper in 2018 covering modern learning titled “Pedagogy for modern learners” in which they outline the roles in which teachers and leaders play in the modern classroom environment. In the paper, students were held as the center of the institution and that leadership must be built around the students rather than having students conform to the system (New Zealand Government, 2018). They put forth the idea that students who have a say in their education often form “enhanced learning partnerships” with faculty, and students are more likely to gain a deeper understanding of what they are learning and are more likely to have a vested interest in their education. In order to facilitate this style of learning, students must be given avenues for providing input on the educational system, and the system must react to those inputs in a well researched, but reasonably timed manner to fully benefit the students. Not only does this help the students, but it helps the teachers understand the communities that students belong to, and allows instructors to use the full extent of their professional skills in their education. (New Zealand Government, 2018) The paper also talks about collaborative learning and project based learning as positive supplements to traditional pedagogy. All teaching in this method will keep a running tab of active assessments to facilitate a fluid environment which is, rather than rigid and supplied for every environment, flexible and tailored to the community of students. The paper also touches on the idea that variability in teacher expectation, and too fluid of learning environments can act as a barrier to student learning and understanding. (New Zealand Government, 2018) As such, a middle point must be held in which all students benefit from the environment rather than only a portion.
Citation Methods

When students use information from outside sources they must follow a specific citation format. This format includes in-text citation of the article or source whenever referenced, specifically providing a hyperlink to the article (when appropriate) on top of a reference to the main title of the source on first reference. Following references to an article or source must be succeeded by an encapsulation of the authors' names and the year of publication of the article. This requirement is specific and does not allow for other forms of citation such as page number, author name citations. When taking information from the instructor’s slides, citation is optional unless directly quoting the instructor’s writing.

When citing against aggregate and synthesis sites such as wikipedia, students should provide citation against the original author’s work rather than the aggregate site. When students cite a website or organization, they will provide embedded hyperlinks inside the proper name of the source rather than the website's domain name. After students complete a citation, they must catalog the source in their bibliography by some consistent format. When embedding journal URLs, especially when the article may exist behind a paywall, students should use 1search and link against the perma-link address there.

The purpose of this citation is not only to protect the writer from plagiarism accusations, but also to allow for professional understanding and critical discourse about the topic. Students should make sure not to embed article links as quotes or terms in their writing and only embed links in end of line citations or when using the title of the articles.
Avoiding Plagiarism

Writing problems can be split into three categories: Plagiarism, cheating, and copyright infringement. To avoid plagiarism in your writing make sure to synthesise information found in articles and papers instead of copying sections verbatim. Similarly, students should make sure to copy only sentences every once and a while instead of large swaths of information. Any sentence copied from an external source should be encapsulated in quotation marks and be cited correctly. Alongside sentences taken from other sources, information such as laws, statistics, opinions, definitions and theories should be cited (even if the information is in a synthesised format). Students can keep track of all their sources using bibliography tools so they can aggregate their sources at the end of their papers.

To avoid cheating students should make sure to only collaborate with other students when explicitly allowed. Overlapping with plagiarism, students shouldn’t reuse papers from previous classes or assignments. Instead, students can selectively quote and cite their other papers. Students shouldn’t purchase papers or sources written by others unless for research and reference alone. Students should give credit and cite graphics that inspire their work.

Finally to avoid copyright infringement students must provide a copyright statement for all embedded media used in their work (including background music, or passing images). Fair use exists for works that exist to criticise, parody, use for news reporting, use for research or to teach. All other uses may infringe on copyright, so students should ask the owner of the media for usage rights before using media in their work.
Checking Originality

When students turn in “examine a case” assignments in canvas the assignment is checked against a database of articles and other students’ assignments for plagiarism. After a few minutes the assignment will be given a score based on its similarity to other assignments. Once the assignment is scored students can view sections of the assignment flagged for possible plagiarism. Students are given the opportunity to revise their assignments and resubmit them to be checked again. Students should note that a higher percentage of matching doesn’t mean the paper is plagiarized. After Turnitin is finished, students can click on the colored “percentage icon” to view what parts of their assignment are flagged as a match.

In the Turnitin write up, students and graders can see exactly what lines are considered a match by the algorithm as well as a link to the paper / article the writing is said to originate from. If text is copied directly from another source without correct citation (Author name and date of publication or inline citation) and especially when not either in a synthesized format or in quotation marks, then the section is considered to be plagiarism. Based off the percentage-match score Turnitin assigns to the assignment the reader will be presented with a colored number. Green scores are usually clean while orange and red scores are subject to suspicion. Students are allowed to revise their submissions and resubmit them, but should note that assignments submitted after the deadline are late and will not be accepted.
Gautam Khetrapal talks about how his experience in university was less about learning and more about memorization. He concludes that the university system is outdated and in our “modern world” we need to focus on “customization” of our learning environment. Khetrapal asserts that a new form of learning exists as a cycle of self teaching, finding a “tribe” in which to grow, and then delving deeper into the topics.

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Bibliography


