

## SENIOR EXIT PORTFOLIO: THE CRITICAL REFLECTION (RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION)

September 2015

**The Critical Reflection** is an essay component of the Senior Exit Portfolio for students in the Rhetoric and Composition Concentration.

*It is also a genre of writing that students will encounter post-graduation in a variety of situations.*

*Should you apply for graduate study, law school, or professional degree programs, your application materials will include a Personal Statement or Professional Statement, either of which ask you to describe and evaluate your accomplishments and goals.*

*Most professional positions require employees to do annual self-evaluations where they are required to analyze the work they've done and describe it to their supervisor, as well as analyze and evaluate their own performance. Also, freelance writers and editors constantly need to evaluate their work, and themselves as writers, to both gain clients, and to apply for grants and funding. These self-reviews may be in the form of letters, application forms, and/or webtexts.*

### Portfolio Requirements for Critical Reflection

Length: 1200 to 1500 words (approximately 5 pages, double-spaced)

Content: Describe yourself as a student and writer in the Rhetoric and Composition concentration, within the English major at Georgia State. Develop responses to these three prompts:

- What is your current definition of “rhetoric”? Which theories, figures, readings, assignments, and/or courses have most contributed to your understanding of rhetoric and its purpose in the world?
- Provide your own definition of “critical thinking,” and discuss specific examples showing how your reading, research, and writing have applied, and demonstrate, critical thinking.
- In what ways do you think you have grown the most as an author and producer of texts? How have your views, attitudes, and understanding of your writing process, revision, and editing changed?

***See below for additional questions and prompts to reflect on.***

Genre: Your essay will blend aspects of a personal narrative with exposition. Attribute sources by including author’s name, title of work, publication, publication date and relevant page numbers, in parentheses immediately after the sentence. Think about how this essay tells a story about your experience, and think about how you wish to inform your audience about your writing and learning.

Tone: Professional. Use humor and casual diction sparingly.

Audience: you are writing for an audience of Georgia State faculty in the English department, and specialists in Rhetoric and Composition. You are also writing for a potential audience of future employers and professional or graduate school programs.

What to avoid:

- While you may talk about your decision to become an English major, make this brief, and connected to Georgia State.
- References to your childhood, high school experiences, or to previous colleges you've attended should be avoided; if you do include an anecdote or facts to provide context for being an English major, keep this to a few sentences or a short paragraph.
- Isolated paragraphs that do not flow together or that seem disconnected to each other.
- Listing or simply stating everything you've done; carefully select examples and specific moments that demonstrate your achievements and development.

***Additional Questions You May Address or Discuss within the Critical Reflection:***

- What is the most significant text you have studied as a rhetoric and composition major? (Give the title, author, publication date, and the context for reading it). Why is this text significant to you now? Why do you think it will be significant to your future career goals?
- What is the most significant assignment/text that you have created as a rhetoric and composition major, and why is it significant for you? How did this assignment/text prepare you for your future career goals?
- How does your current definition of "rhetoric" compare and contrast to what you thought or knew about rhetoric before taking any courses in Rhetoric and Composition, and/or during your first semester of courses in Rhetoric and Composition with your understanding in your last semester?
- What is your current definition of "composition" or "composition studies"? Which theories, figures, readings, assignments, or courses have most contributed to your understanding of it? How does your current definition compare and contrast to what you thought or knew about it before taking any courses in Rhetoric and Composition and/or during your first semester of courses in Rhetoric and Composition?
- What is your current definition of "literacy" or "literacy studies"? Which theories, figures, readings, assignments, or courses have most contributed to your understanding of it? How does your current definition compare and contrast to what you thought or knew about it before taking any courses in Rhetoric and Composition and/or during your first semester of courses in Rhetoric and Composition?

- How has your writing changed to account for audience expectations, and how do you write for different audiences?
- Provide examples and discuss how your reading, research, and writing are multi-modal or digital.
- Provide examples and discuss specific research methods and genres you studied—or produced—as a Rhetoric and Composition student.
- Provide examples and discuss what you have learned about style and its function in communication (visual style, style in written texts, sonic style in audio texts)? How has your study of style influenced your own composing, writing, production, and consumption of texts?
- How have your views about what constitutes “good writing” changed? Which courses or assignments most contributed to what you now believe “good writing” is? What does “good writing” do?
- How did you use the feedback (written and oral comments, rubrics, suggestions for editing and revising) that you received from your professors on your writing and text production? What would you say you’ve changed the most about how you produce texts and evaluate your own writing?
- How did you use the feedback you received during peer review workshops, or Writing Workshops, in your Rhetoric and Composition courses? What did you learn about your own writing through these workshops? How did responding to other students’ texts teach you about writing, revising, and editing?
- Which specific editing and revision strategies do you regularly use as you compose texts within the major, and texts for other areas of your life (extracurricular clubs, internships, job, etc)? Where did these strategies come from (readings, assignments, peer workshops, feedback from professors)?
- How did you use collaboration or collaborative writing within your courses in Rhetoric and Composition? What did you learn from using collaboration?
- What are your future career plans? How did specific courses, assignments, or professors prepare you for your desired career goals?