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Peer Review Assignments in ENGL 1101

I use peer reviews in all of my classes because I am convinced that they help writers improve their documents, help reviewers learn to read critically, and finally, provide me with better documents to grade. That's a win-win-win—a trifecta. In this document, I explain how the peer review process works. In short: On the day of the review, I share two documents with you, and you leave comments on the documents that same day. Simple.

Usually, I assign two peer reviews per document. Each peer review **must be completed on the assigned day** because I ask you not to write in your own document while it is being reviewed by others. Thus, the reviewers must be prompt with their reviews so that the authors can return to writing their document. The morning of the peer review, I look through all the documents, and I drop any document not ready for the review from the process. Those students lose their peer review points. I share documents that are ready with two of your colleagues, who must complete their reviews on the assigned day (yes, I know I am repeating myself, but some of you need the repetition). This means that each of you will receive two documents to review.

I share the documents early in the morning of the peer review. When I share a document, Google sends a Gmail to each reviewer with a link to the shared document. I will also suggest a focus for the peer review, such as how well the document addresses the assignment or how well it identifies and handles the reader. At least one of your comments should address the focus. If by

midday of the peer review you do not have a link to a document, then send me a Gmail immediately. Do not wait.

I share documents with Comment rights, not Edit rights; thus, you cannot edit the documents. You can only make comments. To make a comment:

1. Highlight the text you want to comment about.
2. Type your comment in the text box in the margin.
3. Click the Comment button.
4. If another student has already commented on the text, you may add to their comment by clicking the Reply button in their comment box.

Your document is included in the peer review process only if it is ready to be reviewed. For first reviews, *ready for review* means a rough, but full draft. For second reviews, *ready for review* means a finished, complete draft with all template material (including the timeline) removed and all comments from the first review resolved. I will drop unready documents from the peer review with instructions to complete the document. The authors of dropped documents will receive a 0 on the peer review.

The day after the peer review, I unshare the documents so that the reviewers no longer have access, and that peer review is over. I then look through all of the documents for comments from the reviewers. If I see adequate comments from a reviewer, then that reviewer earns a full 10 points for the peer review. If I do not see adequate comments from a reviewer, then that reviewer earns 0 points. I award fewer points if I judge a reviewer's comments to be inconsequential or trivial. Single comments such as: "I really like this document" or "You are doing good work" are useless and demonstrate to me that the reviewer did not seriously engage

the document. Comments should demonstrate to me that the reviewer actually read the document, understood it, and tried to respond seriously to the document to help their colleague.

Why should a reviewer leave engaging, helpful comments? First, to help their colleagues write better documents that earn a better grade. Everybody makes mistakes in their writing, and a fresh set of eyeballs can more readily see what is working in a document and what isn't working. Then, reviewers themselves benefit by becoming more critical readers. *Critical* here does not mean to criticize; rather, it means to analyze, to critique. Critical reading is a skill that all students can improve and should improve. Your comments should convince me that you are trying to read carefully and critically to help your colleague write better documents.

That's the peer review process. Your task is straightforward:

1. Prepare your own document for the review.
2. On the day of the peer review, look for a Gmail with a link to your assigned document or documents. If you don't have the link by midday, then notify me immediately so that I can fix it.
3. Review your assigned document by the end of the day. I will unshare the document the next day so that the authors can start writing and revising again and you can return to your own document.
4. Remember: serious comments score points, so help your colleague and convince me that you actually read and critically engaged the document.