

Writing Project 3: Households in a Global Context

Goal of Exercise: Write a research paper between 8 and 10 pages in length (plus the bibliography, tables and figures) that explores a single case study (a site, culture, or set of related households) in some depth. In our final unit, we are discussing how social, economic, and political processes broadly grouped under the rubric of globalization variably impact households and communities around the globe. Keeping in mind that globalization has a very long history (the kinds of hierarchical economic and political connections that we see today date back to well before the colonial period in many places), the possibilities are boundless. Our last shared topic—the impacts of globalization on modern Chinese urban and rural households—provided several models of how gender relations, elder care, and migration patterns have changed in China. In this final project, you are asked to explore some aspect of one culture’s economic, social, ideological, or political organization, and how large-scale processes have impacted (or failed to impact) that facet in one specific case study.

Your possibilities are wide open, and I can help you choose appropriate case studies if you have a topic in mind but need help identifying a case study. Because each student or pair of students will be independently researching a topic, your audience has some background in archaeology, but is likely unfamiliar with your particular sources or case studies. This means that you must come to terms with all of your major sources, and provide necessary background information on your chosen case study.

Though this more structured writing format may be specific to the social sciences, it offers an interesting way to think about the different elements of an argument. The theoretical section, for example, will force you to very concisely take a position in a particular debate; this may involve referencing several studies on the same topic but in different areas, or in the same area but on related topics. The methodology asks you to put forth a short list of concrete hypotheses, and to build convincing bridging arguments that seek to operationalize those hypotheses with two or three different lines of evidence (what constitutes evidence depends on your topic). Additionally, you will be asked to write introductory and conclusion sections that make explicit: the importance of your research to others,

what the results will offer to those interested in similar questions or working in different regions, and how your project provides a workable way to contribute to existing debates in your chosen specialty. In these ways, you are proposing a way to contribute to intellectual conversations within archaeology and other relevant disciplines. Finally, you are required to create at least one table and to insert at least one figure for your paper. We will discuss how to effectively use graphics to further your argument in the weeks ahead.

I strongly encourage you to exercise your option for this writing project of working with a partner. If you and a classmate choose to write the paper together, you will share the final grade for the assignment. Your file names should include both authors’ last names, though you are only required to submit each draft to one author’s Assignment folder (both will automatically receive credit for doing so). The benefits include double the feedback (writing partners meet individually with small groups and myself), and the option of splitting the initial drafting tasks.

Project Objectives: We continue to work on critical reading strategies (outlining arguments and succinctly summarizing an author’s project), coming to terms with others’ work, and actively using concepts, methodological approaches, etc. to forward, counter, compare and contrast a number of texts. I expect you to practice all of these skills in this writing assignment, as well as the difficult tasks of developing, revising, and supporting a hypothesis of your own choosing. “Evidence” is again broadly defined, and can include



observations in particular case studies, others' empirically-supported conclusions, patterns in one or more categories of data, another's argument that you find especially compelling, etc. Once again, the relative success of your efforts to both explain and to marshal evidence for your claim will be the most important focus of my comments and my assessment at the end of this project.

Specifically, this assignment has five learning objectives:

- (1) explore the inter-disciplinary theoretical context of a single topic and case study through a "bottom-up" perspective on the impact of globalization;
- (2) define concrete ways to operationalize two or three hypotheses derived from your central claim;
- (3) construct bridging arguments that connect specific data (as lines of evidence for an argument) to your hypotheses;
- (4) discuss the limitations of and alternatives to your argument in a sophisticated and nuanced rhetorical structure;
- (5) and participate in both capacities (as researcher and professional peer) in the peer review process that is a critical part of research in the social and natural sciences.

Project Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography: I encourage you to seek help from a reference librarian or myself to identify sources relevant to your topic and case study. Remember to look beyond Duke's catalog and electronic journals to include both local libraries (especially UNC-Chapel Hill) and WorldCat in your searches. You'll want to do so as soon as possible to allow time for materials requested through interlibrary loan to be delivered to you. Minimally, your project should end up using sources from at least 8 to 10 academic sources, and those sources should include at least one book (a chapter or an essay from an edited volume suffices). Duke's and other local library stems have extensive resources, and I can also loan you some references from my personal library.

The first step in identifying your project is to research and write a short (no more than a page) project prospectus. This prospectus will accomplish three tasks:

- (1) describe the case study you would like to focus on;
- (2) include some preliminary information about your specific topic and a working hypothesis or central claim (though this claim will almost certainly evolve over the course of multiple drafts and workshops); and
- (3) identify the kinds of data you will need to collect to explore or test your hypotheses (options include archival research on published data sources, interviews, and direct observations)

In addition to the project prospectus, you will need to compile an annotated bibliography of preliminary sources to submit at the beginning of the project. This bibliography should include approximately six to eight full bibliographic references of sources, as well as short descriptions after each one that explain how you believe each source will be useful. This means that, while you don't need to have fully read each of those six to eight sources just yet, you do need to acquire them and skim each one to determine whether and how it might be useful to you in your research.

Feedback: These papers will be reviewed by one of your peers in the other section of this course (see "Peer Review Panels" below), in addition to small-group conferences (with me), in-class small-group workshops, and ideally an appointment with a Writing Studio tutor. If you have already had a face-to-face appointment with a tutor, you may choose to use their e-tutor system instead; if you have not yet visited the Writing Studio, you are strongly encouraged to take advantage of their services at some point during this project. Writing partners may attend tutoring sessions together if possible, or each of you may choose to make and attend separate appointments. Your feedback from me will be provided in intensive small-group conferences; be sure to bring your iPod and microphone to all feedback sessions. The extent to which you successfully address my revision comments and your classmates' comments is, as always, part of your grade for the project.

Because we will be workshopping your papers in these different contexts, you are required to include two or three specific concerns that you have about your argument or claim at the top of the first page of each draft. Our workshops and meetings will focus on these primary concerns. Like the pre-appointment Writing Studio

form you complete before a meeting with a tutor, this requirement asks you to take ownership of the feedback session to focus your reader's attention on the issues of greatest concern to you as the author.

Peer Review Panels: Each of you will forward a copy of your second draft via File Exchange to one of your peers in another section of the course for review in class using Microsoft Word's marginal comments and track changes features. Similarly, you will receive another student's paper to print and read before class, when we will discuss the peer review process and guidelines. You will revise your paper and write a cover letter to your reviewer explaining how you incorporated her feedback in your draft, or why you chose not to do so where applicable. The details of this peer review process are described in a separate assignment sheet. This process mimics the peer review of academic grant proposals, journal articles, and book manuscripts; it also provides you with another method (electronically) of soliciting and providing feedback to each other in your future coursework.

Submission Guidelines: Use the following format in naming your Microsoft Word documents:

First draft: *Lastname.WP3.D1.doc* (for example, Beale.WP3.D1.doc)

Second draft: *Lastname.WP3.D2.doc*

Peer reviewed draft: *Lastname.WP3.D2.peerreview.doc*

Final draft with Cover letter to peer reviewer: *Lastname.WP3.D3.doc*

Please upload each draft of your paper to the appropriate Assignments folders in our Blackboard course website. Once you attach your file (click browse to find it), make sure you click on Submit to send it to me, not Save (which uploads it to your Blackboard site, but does not allow me to access or download it).

Reflections Requirement: You will be recording your small-group workshops, group conferences on your second drafts, meetings with your WS tutor, and conversations with me and with each other about revision strategies along the way. The final reflections requirement for this assignment is more extensive than the last as you've developed your abilities as a critical reviewer and as an author on the receiving end of (sometimes complementary or reinforced, sometimes superficial or even contradictory) feedback from multiple readers. In your future academic writing, you may or may not choose to make use of all of these kinds of feedback (workshopping drafts with your peers either face-to-face or electronically, comments from your professor, and the Writing Studio's two kinds of appointments), but they too are important parts of your writers' toolbox to keep in mind.

Project Calendar:

- **Tuesday, October 30:** Project prospectus and annotated bibliography of six to eight sources due in class; upload as a single file by Wednesday, October 31, 6:00 pm. (Only one file for each pair of students must be submitted.)
- **Wednesday, November 7, 6:00 pm:** Complete first draft of paper should be uploaded to Blackboard's Assignments folder for me, and the File Exchange Peer Review group page by 6:00 pm.
- **Thursday, November 8:** Download the proposal you will be reviewing before class that day, and bring either a laptop with the proposal already downloaded to it (internet access is unreliable in LSRC), or a hard copy of that proposal to class for the peer review process. Note that if you bring a hard copy to class, you must type your comments in the margins and at the end of the document before sending it to those students by tomorrow.
- **Friday, November 9, 6:00 pm:** Please use File Exchange to send your reviewed paper with in-text comments back to the student reviewer, and upload this same document to Blackboard for me. Please indicate in the Comments section of the Assignment folder upload screen your name, and the name of the student (or pair of students, or group of students) whose proposal you have reviewed. These two steps must be completed by 6:00 pm.
- **Tuesday, November 13, 8:00 am:** Second draft of your paper due to me via the Assignments folders; please also upload this draft to the small-group conference group pages, download and read your two group-mates' second drafts before your meeting.
- **Thursday, November 15-Friday, November 16:** Small-group conferences for oral feedback. Please bring your iPod and microphone, and your comments on the two papers you read, to the

meeting. You'll get my feedback during these conferences. (note that there is no class meeting on Thursday this week)

- **Monday, November 26, 6:00 pm:** Please revise your proposal using the feedback you or your group has received from different readers. You will compose a cover letter addressed to your peer reviewer explaining how you have incorporated these various forms of feedback and, where applicable, where you disagree with your reviewer's suggestions or comments. Both the final draft of your paper and the cover letter must be submitted to me via the Assignments folder, and to your student reviewer via File Exchange by 6:00 pm.
- **Tuesday, November 27, midnight:** The final steps in this writing project are simple ones to complete the peer review process. First, you should compare and merge the draft of the proposal you reviewed and which has your comments in it with the revised draft you received on Monday. Please read through the merged draft and the accompanying cover letter; next, you must send me an email indicating whether or not you are satisfied with the revisions made by the student(s) whose proposal you reviewed, and by their explanations of those revisions in the cover letter. Congratulations! You've completed the final paper and your role as a peer review panel member.

SECTIONS OF THE ESSAY

Each of the sections of the research paper should answer the following questions. If it helps, use this as a checklist.

Introduction:

- What is the topic of your proposed research?
- What is the reasoning behind your central claim? (warrants and reasons)
- Where exactly will your central claim be tested (what's your case study)?

Background:

- Is the information provided in this section confined to facts about the case study? If there is extraneous information in this section, references to theoretical positions or other unnecessary details, make sure to eliminate or consolidate them.

Theory:

- Have you come to terms with several other studies about topics similar to yours in sufficient detail?
- For each of those other studies, have you explained exactly how the proposed project adds to, builds on, corrects, or extends it (i.e., intertextuality)? (Note that if another person's work is mentioned, you must make it clear why it's relevant to know about that work.)
- How does your central claim relate to others' work? Have you explained specifically how your work contributes to existing research in one or more regions on similar topics in your chosen specialty?

Methodology:

- Are two or three specific lines of evidence (kinds of data, variables, information) covered in this section? More or less than that is probably not sufficient, or too ambitious, respectively.
- For each of those lines of evidence, have you justified your use of that line of evidence to test your claim?
- Have you made explicit and specific predictions about the patterns you expect to find in that line of evidence if your claim is correct?

Results and Discussion:

- Are the data collected to test each hypothesis summarized in the text, a table, descriptive or quantitative terms, and the results clearly stated?
- Are there sufficient examples presented in the texts, tables, or figures?
- Are the implications of your research for others working in this area or on this topic explained?
- Are confounding variables, alternative interpretations of patterns in the data, counterexamples, possible objections, and so forth, discussed and countered where applicable?

- Are future lines of inquiry or possible uses of your research suggested?

References/Bibliography:

- Are all instances of quotes or specific information referenced either in the text or in footnotes? Do references to more general things include the authors' names and (if needed) the year of publication? Do references to quotes or more specific information also include the relevant page number(s)?
- Is there a full, complete, and spell-checked bibliography at the end of the paper?

Figures and Tables:

- Does each figure or table have a sequential number (Figure 1, Table 1, Table 2, etc.), and a descriptive caption?
- Is each one actively used in the text (not just passively referred to)?