Assessment criteria and task descriptions, ENG 2506, portfolio examination

Excellent

This level of work is outstanding, showing evidence of extensive knowledge, understanding, and consistent/continuous engagement with the course subject matter in all components that constitute the examination portfolio.

- Extraordinary ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate a variety of texts/media artifacts within sustained arguments.
- Evidence of extensive reading and engagement with course material and additional materials.
- Frequent evidence of undoubted quality in the use of scholarly sources with a view to excavating academically sound work/substance from primary source texts/media and/or secondary as well as tertiary sources.
- Excellent presentation and writing. Contains insight and elements of originality.
- Thorough, productive, and germane response to and integration of revision notes/feedback received from class lecturer.
- Writing that has attained high professional standards. Understands and can easily use the *Chicago Manual of Style*, notes and bibliography form.
- Outstanding insight, weight, and sophistication and an ability to undertake advanced study with imagination, consistency, and tenacity.
- All components of the portfolio are present and accounted for, and have been thoroughly revised more than once.

Good

At this level of assessment, the student presents good arguments and displays solid engagement with the course subject matter based on an above-average range of reading and/or engagement with sources/media texts. Yet, there are issues with writing and/or source work and/or argument that would still need to be addressed. These, however, represent opportunities for the student to develop and ultimately acquire higher levels of scholarly skills.

- Weighs up and evaluates different arguments and identifies key issues in a germane fashion, and uses a range of examples to support their argument(s).
- Understands important arguments and ideas from the course reading and beyond. Content is always relevant and well-presented, and generally well-focused, but may lack either breadth or depth and/or generally more detailed analysis.
- Is mostly well-structured, revealing a clear logic and consistency in topic development/execution.
- Solid albeit not necessarily extensive/thorough response to and integration of revision notes/feedback received from class lecturer.
- Shows breadth of knowledge, but may show some limitations in primary/secondary source work (e.g. extracting and paraphrasing of relevant subject matter from sources).
- Well-written with few technical errors and/or mishaps in scholarly appropriate style/presentation. Provides references largely in line with the *Chicago Manual of Style*, notes and bibliography form.

- All components of the portfolio are included in its final version, and have been solidly revised while still showing room for improvement.

Average
Work in this range shows relevant though not necessarily consistent engagement with course subject matter. One or more components of the portfolio may be more descriptive than analytical, and, additionally, may show insufficient responses to feedback.

- Submitted work is based on more limited reading; over-reliance on provided course text or other basic course material.
- While the student's work may show insightful and even original engagement with primary texts/media artifacts, their written output in one or more of the portfolio components shows noticeably limited use of, engagement with, and integration of scholarly resources.
- Provides reasonably structured accounts, but with some signs of confusion and/or limited critical insights/analysis. May also contain errors of fact or interpretation.
- Submitted work may show inconsistent use of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, or a somewhat general lack of scholarly rigor/care.
- Some grammatical and spelling errors, or mishaps with the references.
- Limited and/or superficial response to and integration of revision notes/feedback received from class lecturer.
- One component of the portfolio may be incomplete, and/or multiple components were submitted for final assessment while displaying limited/sparse revision.

Poor
While work at this level of assessment may attest to the student's genuine interest for and tenacious engagement with the subject matter, their written output together with their scholarly source work shows multiple issues/deficiencies that undercut the student's enthusiasm/zeal.

- Portfolio components may engage with subject matter (primary texts/media artifacts/secondary sources) relevant to course topic but display a noticeable degree of inconsistency in the application basic scholarly skills.
- Submitted work draws on/refers to only a limited number of sources whose scholarly quality/suitability may also be questionable.
- Insufficient and/or incomplete response to and integration of revision notes/feedback received from class lecturer.
- Submitted work includes disorganized, ineffective and/or confused/confusing presentation of engagement with subject matter.
- A grade at the top of this range suggests a basic degree of competence and knowledge, but shows insufficient scholarly rigor/engagement with primary texts/media as well as secondary sources (incl. adherence to the *Chicago Manual of Style*)
- A grade at the bottom range shows—in addition to the above—significant limitations/weaknesses in language use that interfere with readability/presentation and/or comprehensibility.

- One component of the portfolio may be missing, or multiple components may be incomplete/inconsistent, showing the shortcomings of draft-level submissions.

Unacceptable
Work in this range may feature a failure to carry out the tasks assigned, serious writing problems, and/or other significant issues.

- No serious attempt to carry out the tasks assigned.
- Haphazard/inconsistent engagement with course subject matter.
- Little to no understanding or knowledge of the course and its themes.
- Negligible or wholly irrelevant contents.
- Lack of scholarly conduct/rigor.
- Inadequate referencing and frequent grammatical and spelling errors.
- Use of questionable/problematic sources/texts.
- No engagement with feedback/guidance provided by the course lecturer.
- A larger number of portfolio components are either incomplete or missing.

Examination Portfolio SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

A. As you are preparing the final examination portfolio, please make sure to carefully (!) revisit the task goals/descriptions in the class syllabus (p. 3, Parts 4 thru 6) and on the task guidelines/instructions pages on Canvas.
B. The completed portfolio consists of **a) a main part**, and **b) an appendix** that should be submitted in **one combined PDF file**.
C. For potential co-grading procedures, please make sure to remove any and all identifying markers (names, etc.) in your documents.

Use the following structure as a checklist and a model for your table of contents/cover page:

"Into the West" EXAMINATION PORTFOLIO

1) Main part

- Thoroughly revised "Text-in-Context" one sheet *(Note: The assessment of this obligatory component of the portfolio will in large part depend on how thoroughly and effectively you have improved the draft version of the document)*
- Thoroughly revised annotated mini-bibliography *(Note: The assessment of this obligatory component of the portfolio will in large part depend on how thoroughly and effectively you have improved the draft version of the document)*
- Final research paper (5 full pages of running text, +/- 10%, references/bibliography are not included in the 5 pages; *Chicago Manual of Style* [NB Variant]; minimum of 5 scholarly/academic sources)

2) Appendix

- Notes for designated respondent duties (This can be free-form text)
- "Text-in-context" presentation materials (slides, etc.)

Examination Portfolio INDIVIDUAL TASK DESCRIPTIONS/INSTRUCTIONS

1) "Text-in-Context" one sheet

- A one sheet is a **straightforward and practical** document. Whether it serves as promotional material, an executive summary, or for educational purposes, the basic goals for a one sheet are to **"load" it with concise/useful information** while maintaining **high levels of accessibility/user-friendliness**.
- A one sheet is useful because it is packed with essential information and content. Most people tend to look for straightforward and practical information. With a one sheet, the **focus is primarily on content** and not merely random content but only the most important and relevant information, **presented in a visually appealing and logical way**.
- A one sheet is **a time-saving document** that can immediately be scanned in a matter of seconds. Since all information is presented on a single page, it will not take long for the reader to go through all of its contents.
- However, a one sheet is **NOT a page full of running text**. A one sheet consists of a creative and user-friendly combination of text, text elements, pictures, and other visual components (e.g. structuring elements, pointers, arrows, connecting lines, etc.)

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1. **Main task:** Produce a useful, easy-to-access, 1-page resource for quick reference that **captures the key information/insights/reference points of the Text-in-Context presentation**project/topic area.
2. **Scope/format:** The one sheet needs to fit onto **one single A4 page**.
3. **Practicalities:** You might find that MS Word is potentially not the most user-friendly program to create a one sheet. Presentation software such as MS PowerPoint, Keynote, Google Sheets, and others should work just fine. You may always opt for more specialized graphic design software. Export your one sheet as a PDF.
4. **Additional help:** By way of a little additional "inspiration", you might like to **check out this mini-archive** of one sheets from different classes in the past.
5. **Due date/submission:** Regardless of your presentation date, the completed annotated mini-bibliography must by submitted via Canvas by **[date/time]**.
6. **Feedback/revision:** Students will **receive feedback and revision notes** on their one sheets. Having tended to the feedback, **students are to produce a revised version** of the one sheet which is then submitted as part of the complete examination portfolio.

2) Annotated mini-bibliography

Developing and writing **annotations** for sources you are planning to use in your scholarly pursuits is an **essential research skill**; this is also true if you do not end up using a particular source, or just parts of it. An annotation is **NOT "just" a summary** but rather the product of acquiring and transforming knowledge by way of consulting, studying, and assessing the sources you work with.

1. **Guidelines for "summative annotations":** Please go to our Digital Resource Repository and access Luke Beatty's and Cynthia Cochran's *Writing the Annotated Bibliography: A Guide for Students and Researchers* (2020). By way of a general preparation for this task, **read Chapter 4, "Types of Annotation"** (pp. 31–53). The format of your annotated mini-bibliography will be that of a **"summative annotation"** (pp. 36–40). Chapter 4 includes handy, **easy-to-use checklists** for this as well as other types of annotations (pgs. 40, 44, 47, 51). The chapter also provides you with good **sample annotations**. You will find even more model annotations in Chapter 9 (pp. 105–125).
2. **Main task:** You are to write "summative annotations" for **a minimum of four thematically relevant/appropriate sources**. **Three of the sources must be scholarly/academic in nature**, i.e., peer-reviewed texts that were published by a university press, a scholarly reputable publisher, or in an academic journal. Such sources could be a monograph, a chapter in an edited collection/volume, or a journal article but **NOT a book review**. You may **freely choose the fourth source** for the bibliography (e.g., audio/visual material, a documentary, a podcast, a radio program, a recording of a lecture, etc.).
3. **Scope/length:** At least **three well-structured paragraphs** (250–350 words/paragraph) **for eachsource** (i.e. min. 12 paragraphs in total).
4. **Format:** As per Department regulations, the annotated mini-bibliography must **adhere to the *Chicago Manual of Style*** (NB Variant).
5. **Reminder:** The sources you select must be tied to/relevant for the topic area of your Text-in-Context presentation project.
6. **Additional help:** In addition to the checklists in Beatty and Cochran, you may also want to check out the guidelines for critically analyzing the content of sources courtesy of the Cornell University library.
7. **Due date/submission:** Regardless of your presentation date, the completed annotated mini-bibliography must by submitted via Canvas by **[date/time]**.
8. **Feedback/revision:** Students will **receive feedback and revision notes** on their annotations. Having tended to the feedback, **students are to produce a revised version** of their annotated mini-bibliographies which is then submitted as part of the complete examination portfolio.

3) Final thesis/observation-driven essay

1. **Main task:** Produce **a thesis/observation-driven final paper** that **responds to <u>one</u> of five pre-selected writing prompts**. Each prompt is tied to one of the primary text excerpts we dissected and contextualized in class. Your paper will have to draw on pertinent secondary sources. Consequently, you are required to **make use of a minimum of 5 scholarly/academic sources**.
2. **Formal requirements:** In accordance with UiO regulations, the final paper will be **5 full pages of running text** (where a standard page consists of approx. 2,300 characters; +/- 10%). References, bibliography, and other extent material are not included in the 5 pages. The text must adhere to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (footnote variant)Links to an external site. and all other guidelines for writing term papers at ILOS.

<u>Final essay prompts</u> <u>(CHOOSE ONE):</u>

a. John Filson's biography of backwoodsman Daniel Boone gives us a glimpse of the position that the frontier/the wilderness occupied in the colonial imagination. Using our dissection of *The Adventures of Col. Daniel Boone* (1784) as a starting point, write an essay that maps out and explicates the significance of the frontier/the wilderness—i.e. the Old-Old West/the First West—in Revolutionary America/the Early Republic (i.e. approximately between the 1770s and 1800).
b. James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* (1823-41) contributed much literary-cultural labor to the mythologization and romanticization of frontier spaces, frontier contacts/exchanges, and the archetypal frontier hero. Using our dissection of excerpts from *The Pioneers* (1823) and *The Pathfinder* (1840) as anchor point, write an essay that more fully contextualizes Cooper's story cycle as a significant milestone in the mythos of the West, serving, among other things, as a precursor to the formation of the Western as a genre at the end of the 19th century.
c. In his work as columnist and editor, John L. O'Sullivan did much to articulate, disseminate, and popularize the discourse of Manifest Destiny among the wider populace in Antebellum America. Using our preliminary contextualization of his essay "The Great Nation of Futurity" (1839) as a starting point, write an essay that maps out and explicates the political uses of Manifest Destiny (as discourse and as a concept) before the Civil War.
d. Henry David Thoreau was one of the major contributors to American Transcendentalism, a literary, philosophical and spiritual movement that coalesced in the late 1820s and continued to grow in importance and artistic output in the decades leading up to the Civil War. Using the excerpts from his 1862 essay "Walking" as a touchstone, write an essay that explores and explicates how and why Transcendentalists were critical of expansionism especially as it was intertwined with the forces of rapid industrialization.
e. The impact that Frederick Jackson Turner's "frontier thesis" had on the historiography of the American West can hardly be overstated. It was the principal paradigm that dominated history and adjacent disciplines for a good six to seven decades. Consequently, write an essay that presents a thorough, deconstructive critique of Turner's frontier thesis from a New Western History vantage point. For example, you may draw on Patty Limerick's "rendezvous model" of Western history as a starting point and then assemble your critique of the frontier model from the insights of other New Western historians such as Richard White, William Cronon, Clyde Millner II, etc.