

Vivian Ferris

Kerrie Carsey

Cindy Crimmins

FCO 105

May 3rd, 2016

Theory of Writing

I think that writing is complex and complicated. There are many different aspects, ways to write, and reasons to write. These reasons to write are for different purposes and for different audiences. These kinds of writing have different concentrations of gathering information, thinking, and expressing feelings to create the final product. As a Mass Communications major hoping to find a job some day in this field, there are various ways I need to utilize writing as part of the jobs. Just in the courses that I will take at York College, there is a variation of writing purposes. I am going to go through a few different courses and discuss how writing is used in each.

A few courses in the York College Mass Comm major contain writing techniques that are similar to what the generic college writing might be. In classes like Mass Communications and Communication Theory, there is a lot of background information on the field and its theories rather than hands-on practice like another section of courses. These are some of the classes where there is lectures, exams, and written papers. The writing needed for these courses are very similar to writing done for other classes, like Rhetorical Communications. It is standard research papers and essays about the subject matter. This course taught me very good information about how to write and integrate quotes. For example, in my paper I wrote: “Currently, “there are huge

cuts to spending on contraception and STI services” (Marcotte). However, Oksman points out in her article that with huge limit to birth control options, “the economy would not only be hit with a decrease in full time workers and educated employees, there would also be a huge cost in taking care of all those pregnancies and babies.” Before this, I never grasped the concept of using quotes in the proper manner. Learning how to write this way was very beneficial. Mass Comm is a class that I am currently taking, and even though I am somewhat comfortable with writing and research papers, it was an entirely new subject to me, which caused me to have a different development style than I had before. I used the skills from Rhet. Comm, actually, to aid in writing this paper as well. I used some of my skills for using quotes in the term paper, which led to a pretty good grade. As for Comm Theory, this course is infamously the hardest communications course at the college. By the time I take the course junior year, I know I will have developed some of the analytical writing skills needed to be able to have success in the class.

Another type of classes in the communications department revolves around hands-on practical learning. While there is still an aspect of lecture, most of the learning is hands on. These classes include Video Production, Audio Production, and Broadcast Performance. The courses are generally editing and physical performances. Now, there is a different purpose for writing when it comes to these classes. At first, I thought there was not going to be a big writing aspect to these courses, but I was wrong. The biggest purpose of writing in these sections for me is organization. While there is not writing for the end goal of an academic paper, there is actually a large amount of writing involved, which was a surprise to me. I am currently finishing up my Audio Production course. We had one written exam, with a short essay at the end of it. While that was an example of pretty general writing, I did more in other ways. Most of the projects in

the course required planning on my part. I do not know whether or not this was the same for each of my classmates because it was not required, but I do know that writing out my plans was very beneficial to the process. Some projects are quite complex, there is planning required with what, where, and when to record. I need to write out as much detail as I can of what I want each of the parts to sound like, or I will not be able to produce what I want to. In my outline I wrote, “1. Walking around collecting equipment, light chatter; 2. Trunk Open; 3. Put equipment in trunk; 4. Trunk Close; 5. Car doors open; 6. People get into car; 7. Car doors close; 8. Car start.” Even though that there are eight steps, it only translated to about seven to ten seconds of actual recorded time. For the four minute project, I had about sixty steps like these each describing a specific sound I desired. Keeping incredibly detailed plans and records allows for me to produce exactly what I want.

Similarly to this, in the field of Mass Comm, especially if I work with video or audio production, there is going to be a lot of work with other people. If I write out a plan with a storyboard (visual plan), people are going to have to understand what I am saying. If it is a big enough project, I will not be filming or recording every single section. People might need to follow and produce plans that I wrote. Because of this, the plan needs to be very well written and very detailed including instructions that allow people to completely reproduce what I, as the author, want.

The news industry has a very unique style of writing. There are a few classes at York in the communications department that teach and use newswriting. There are two classes in particular, Broadcast Media Writing and News Writing and Production, which utilize this style of writing. The purpose for this style is to ultimately inform viewers on sometimes very serious matters. The way the words are written is deliberate and to the point. There is no fluff or

extremely big words used in news broadcasts because they are usually directed at the general public. The language needs to be formal enough to fit the genre, but easy enough to understand for the audience. The way that the scripting for news broadcasting works is that it also sometimes needs to be timed. The author of news writing needs to know the cadence and syntax of words and understand how it must be read. For example, one of the projects given is a Public Service Announcement that must be read in 29.5 seconds. The line, “nearly 16 million kids in the U.S. struggle with hunger, and without free school lunches, many of them may miss meals this summer,” was written deliberately to be read in 6.5 seconds by the producer. Additionally, when someone is fluent enough in this type of writing and has a career as a news writer, they sometimes need to be able to write very coherent news stories in a very short amount of time. There are instances in news broadcasting when breaking news happens and these writers need to use their skills to properly express the news to the audience that will watch.

All of these different classes are part of different sections of the Mass Comm industry. As a Mass Comm major, I will end up taking all of these courses. There are many different kinds of writing because in each part of the industry there is a different purpose for writing.