

Short Paper 1.6: Major Paper Conference Memo

engl 111 / sec. M / winter quarter 2006-07 / chang



You have been introduced to major paper assignment for the quarter, which asks you to select a compelling cultural production to close-read, analyze, and critique. You have done several readings (hopefully read them more than once) that have introduced the concepts of an academic claim, of rhetorical reading, and the work of cultural studies. You have had some practice with reading and analyzing writing, image, video, and other cultural productions.

Continue thinking about the major paper project. What question are you asking about your texts? What do you think your text is “doing” or “arguing” or “revealing” about the kinds of issues and analyses we have been discussing and practicing in class. In other words, what do your texts tell us, the reader of your analysis, about ourselves, our culture, our world? Obviously, you are not going to be able to write about everything you discover. Choose what is most interesting, most compelling to you. Also choose what you can support with the readings and with outside research.

To help you concisely articulate your major paper claim and your writing plan for the major paper, you will draft a memorandum (or memo) to bring with you to your conference (along with a claim worksheet, initial research, and any other pertinent materials). Memorandums (as used in the business and bureaucratic world) are brief, precise, information or data rich, semi-formal to formal, and purposeful pieces of technical writing. Memos usually use block format and contain:

- 1) DATE:
- 2) TO:
- 3) FROM:
- 4) SUBJECT:
- 5) One to five block paragraphs, single spaced, that cover main points, relevant information, and necessary details concisely and to-the-point.

For your conference, prepare a 1-page memo written to me that:

- 1) expresses your final paper’s main claim and explains why you believe it to be a reasonable and viable argument.
- 2) supplements your claim with two or three quotes or other evidence that help elaborate where your final paper is going.
- 3) briefly outlines your paper and possible sub-claims.
- 4) raises any specific questions you may have about your claim, your analysis, or your research.

You may also want to supplement your explanation with what additional research you have found. Be certain to bring the texts you are working with to your conference. Be prepared to discuss your memo and your paper at your conference.

Targeted outcomes: 1, 2, 3

Turn in: 1 page, memo format, typed, no title page, single-spaced
major paper claim worksheet

Due: at your major paper conference