I. Rhetoric and Writing with Purpose

The foundation of rhetoric lies in the social act of communication. Essentially, rhetoric is using available resources to enact a purpose (or "telos") through spoken or written communication. Rhetoric is as old as language itself and people have attempted to codify it since the advent of writing.

During the time of Socrates (circa 5th century BCE) there were two schools of thought which argued for distinct purposes of rhetoric. The Sophists believed that the purpose of rhetoric was to persuade the audience and its effectiveness was to be measured by how well it persuaded. Socrates believed that the purpose of rhetoric was to reveal the truth about the issue under discussion. Socrates believed that rhetoric was not a stylistic exercise in order to persuade a gullible audience, but a means for discovering and expressing what "the good" is.

Both the Sophist and Socratic views of rhetoric highlight its breadth—it is as much process, a way of coming to a conclusion, as it is a way to express that conclusion. And although we will be utilizing more contemporary practices of rhetoric, the foundations of classical rhetoric will never be too far from our discussion.

A. The Rhetorical Situation

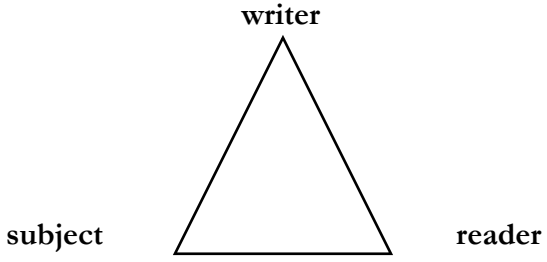
There are many factors that dictate how you approach a moment of communication. For example, if you are visiting a doctor's office because of some malady, your primary purpose is to express, as specifically as you can, what your symptoms are—you want the doctor to know exactly what you are feeling. The doctor, on the other hand, is not only responding to the expression of your symptoms, but is comparing those symptoms to a possible diagnosis, leading to further questions. This rhetorical situation really doesn't involve "persuasion," but is focused on an exchange of information. When you find yourself in casual conversation with friends, a specific purpose might be absent. The easygoing banter reinforces the already-established social cohesion among friends.

Consider the language you would use in a text (*RU ready?*) compared to the language you would use if testifying in a court case, or were confessing to a clergy member. Every rhetorical situation we find ourselves in, every speech act we make, is governed by assumptions (and sometimes rules) that dictate our expression and our response to the expression of others. Social or professional awkwardness results from not adhering to the assumptions and rules of a rhetorical situation. Indeed, the court would go silent if you answered in response to a question of the judge, "That's right Daddio!"

This handbook explores the rules and assumptions for analyzing and expressing yourself in academic rhetorical situations, which are an essential, if narrow, group of speech acts that we use in higher education. In order to explore these assumptions and rules, we need to formalize the speech act, first using information theory, and then using contemporary rhetoric.

If we were to ask ourselves, "What are the necessary ingredients for a successful speech act?" We would probably generate the components in information theory. We need a Sender, a Message, a Receiver, and a Channel. The Sender has a Message to send to the Receiver. The message is transmitted through a Channel. What do you think the channel is for a speech act? If you think it is language you would be right.

The rhetorician James Kinneavy noted that all **rhetorical situations** can be discussed in these terms if we define them by their purpose. Kinneavy's organization of the speech act into purposes has defined instruction in composition for the last forty or so years. The easiest way to envision Kinneavy's scheme is by using a visual aid.



By organizing the rhetorical situation in terms of its purpose, we have an all-inclusive vocabulary for organizing communication. Unless you are an experimental writer and artist (see the OULIPO writers), every act of communication you engage in begins with a purpose (the ancient Greeks had a marvelous word for the end, purpose, or goal of human activity: *telos*).

We will use Kinneavy's scheme to describe the kinds of writing you will be asked to complete in an academic setting.

1. Self-Expressive Writing

If the purpose of the writing focuses on the **Writer**, that kind of writing is called **Self-Expressive** writing. The purpose of self-expressive writing is to reveal the writer to the audience, not to be judged, or in an attempt of persuasion, but to express the writer's self. Examples of this kind of writing are the diary, personal letters, chatty emails, or informal texts. Memoirs, in which a writer

writes about his or her life, are a kind of formal act of self-expression.

You may encounter this type of writing early in a composition class or in a creative writing class. Otherwise, it is very rare to encounter this kind of speech act in The Academy (we will use the term "The Academy" to designate any institution of higher education, in this case, MACC). Indeed, how something is unique to you is *rarely* pertinent in The Academy. The Academy is a place where what you think, what can be measured as objective, what can be proven, is most important. Indeed, you ought to avoid starting any statement with, "I feel…" in The Academy. It is your rigorous and considered *thoughts* that count the most, not your feelings.

When you write in the self-expressive mode, an honest, accurate approach works best. Remember the telos—you want to share with the audience something about yourself worth telling.

2. Informative Writing

If the purpose of the writing focuses on the **Subject**, that kind of writing is called **Informative Writing**. The purpose of informative writing is to describe, evaluate, measure, analyze, a subject. Examples of informative writing include lab reports, description, newspaper accounts, phone directories, graphs, indices, textbooks, etc.

Personal feelings about the subject are not germane in informative writing, nor is the purpose to persuade (though informative writing certainly can be marshaled in service of a persuasive intent). The focus is on subject matter.

Informative writing is more difficult to accomplish than you may think. We live in a culture, through the digital media, of instant personal reactions to anything. Our culture focuses more on how something affects us than it does on *what the thing is*. Informative writing is only concerned with what the thing itself.

In order to effectively write informatively, a few terms need to be defined. First you need to know the difference between **subjective** and **objective**. **Subjective** means pertaining to you—how something affects you. For example, vanilla ice cream. If you say, "I don't like vanilla ice cream." That is a subjective response. **Objective** means the qualities of a thing that exist independent of any one observer. "Vanilla ice cream is given its flavor by vanilla beans." That is an objective statement.

Let's say that you refuse to believe vanilla beans exist—you are wrong on facts and your denial of vanilla beans does not make them go away, nor does it make vanilla ice cream any less delicious. Okay, you caught me! The deliciousness of vanilla ice cream is a subjective response. In The Academy, you need to be

diligent about not treating subjective responses as objective responses. "Vanilla ice cream is the worst," is a subjective statement disguised as objective, unlike, "Vanilla ice cream is the best." Okay, you caught me again, that is a subjective statement.

When you write informatively, you avoid subjective responses in the language that you use. One way you do so is by avoiding using words **pejoratively**. What does "pejorative" mean?" Let's define a few other words first so we can firmly grasp what "pejorative" means. First **denotative**. The **denotative** meaning of a word is its dictionary definition—its technical and precise definition. But words can evoke all manner of feelings and thoughts. The **connotative** meaning of a word is the feelings that word evokes. For example "slim" and "slender" have relatively positive connotations whereas "skinny" can have a negative connotation—yet their denotative meaning is just about the same. You use a word in its **pejorative** sense when you use a word for its negative connotation. In politics, for example, the denotative meaning of "conservative" is someone wanting to conserve, or preserve the status quo. A "progressive" or "liberal" is someone who wants to improve the status quo. Depending who the audience is, both of those terms are often used as an insult; in other words, they are used **pejoratively**, even though their dictionary definition is value neutral. If someone screws up their face and gives a disgusted look while saying, "Oh, he's such a *liberal*," that's using the term "liberal" pejoratively.

The key to most informative writing is a rigorous attention to the way things are—the particulars of the subject—not its effect on the perceiver. Informative writing is factual (a fact is an objective condition) and descriptive; it avoids judgment and opinion.

When your informative writing involves **description**, the old writer's adage, "Show don't tell," applies. "The sunset was beautiful," is telling. Why? Because the writer is *telling* the reader how to interpret the sunset. Do you recognize that statement as subjective? Now if the writer writes, "the evening was colored with roseate-streaked clouds moving across a pale blue sky," the writer is showing the reader what made the sky look "beautiful." Let the reader make the esthetic judgment—the writer should present those details to the reader. What is the most effective way of providing details to the reader? By presenting sensory information—what you can feel, hear, see, smell, and taste.

The reader is always advised to have a bit of skepticism when interpreting any informative writing—you want to make sure the writer is not presenting information with an agenda hidden from you. Beware of persuasion in informative clothing!

3. Persuasive Writing or The Argument

When the purpose of a piece of writing is to move the reader to a new position, it is called persuasive writing. This kind of essay, the essay of persuasion, or the argument, is where the subject matter gets complicated quickly. I will focus more on the Socratic purpose of persuasion than the Sophist purpose.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle, in his book *The Rhetoric*, highlights three ways to persuade an audience. For Aristotle the grounding for these modes of persuasion is in what Aristotle believed moved our souls. The three modes Aristotle highlights are **Pathos**, **Ethos**, and **Logos**. We will discuss each in turn.

If you want to persuade an audience, appeal to their emotions. **Pathos** is an appeal to the emotions of an audience. Advertisers and politicians do this all the time—they scare the audience, make them feel insecure, or superior, in order to "sell" their viewpoint or product. "Give me your money or I'll punch you in the eye," is pathos argumentation. When Marc Antony wants to raise the rabble against Brutus in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, he plays to the emotion of the audience. Many teachers of writing would argue that the pathos appeal is fine and that many great writers have used it. I take the Socratic approach in dismissing it. I believe that the pathos appeal should be limited and subordinate to ethos and logos, because pathos is not connected to "truth" or the "good." In other words, its effectiveness at manipulating audiences has nothing to do with being right, truthful, or good. In politics, whenever you hear a politician argue that their position should be endorsed because it is for the "good of the children," the alarm bells of the pathos appeal should ring in your ears. Of course, no one wants to hurt innocent children. Generating fear in your audience is also an emotional appeal. When a politician states, "the world is on fire! The world is on fire!" you should recognize the appeal to the emotion of fear and put out the fire with logic.

"Ethics" is the study of correct behavior or action. An **Ethos** appeal is one where the author's integrity is on display. If someone has earned your trust, you are more likely to assent to what they propose. How do you set yourself up as an ethical writer? First, don't lie! Give opposing views a fair hearing. If you are using other people's ideas or words CITE THEM otherwise you are a plagiarist and plagiarists cannot make ethical appeals. If you sound honest in your work, if you treat those who disagree with you with fairness, if you properly cite the work of the sources you rely on to make your case, you will be establishing yourself as an ethical writer.

a. Logos and Reasoning

The appeal that carries the most weight in The Academy is the logos appeal. The **logos** argument must be soundly reasoned, punctuated with facts, arranged according to an internal logic that leads your reader to accept your proposition out of its rational inevitability. This arrangement of propositions or facts is the essence of reasoning. One way I like to think of reasoning is that it takes old "knowns"—facts that are fairly well-established, or premises that are credible—and derives new "knowns" from the old. That movement—from established knowledge to new knowledge—is the movement of reasoning.

The Academy recognizes two types of reasoning that help us derive a proposition from evidence—**Inductive** and **Deductive** reasoning.

Generally speaking, **Inductive Reasoning** takes us from specific cases and derives a general law from looking at the specific cases. Let's say you met an alien from the planet Zork and the alien was purple. You then proceeded to a Cardinals game and in the box seats off the third base line were a large group of purple creatures. In the fifth inning the announcer states, "The St. Louis Cardinals would like to extend a welcome to our visitors from planet Zork" whereupon they stand up in their box seats and wave their tentacles to the crowd. What would you conclude about aliens from the planet Zork? Yes, that they may be Cardinals fans, but also that they are purple. You would reach that conclusion through inductive reasoning: every alien from Zork you have seen is purple; therefore aliens from Zork are generally purple. Your mind moves from the specific cases to derive a general law.

Can you be 100% sure? No you cannot. Your conclusion, "aliens from Zork are purple" is not guaranteed by your premise, "every alien from Zork I've seen is purple." Imagine your surprise if you went to a Royals game and found that Zorks who are Royals fans are green! This gives us a more precise definition of inductive reasoning: If the premises are true, the conclusion may or may not be true.

This idea of "may or may not" deserves further discussion. The "may or may not" is established as a margin of error or probability of being correct. Inductive reasoning is not weak because it cannot lead to absolute certainty—it is effective because it applies to so much in our uncertain universe.

Indeed, inductive reasoning is at the heart of science. The power of science is that its premises are constantly being checked until we can be 99.999999% sure of the conclusions that science derives. Another way that science is persuasive is that if the premises eventually lead us into a dead end, we can get rid of the conclusion and discover one that leads us out of the dead end. The surety of

inductive conclusions is probabilistic and, in that way, it is perfectly suited to generate conclusions about a probabilistic universe. Before we move on to deductive reasoning, we will discuss one more attribute of this "may or may not." If you are identifying the native colors of Zorks, 99% would seem to be a pretty good percentage. How about if you were building a bridge over an interstate highway? Would 99% be a good margin of error? Nope. How about if you're a baseball player looking for a fastball? I imagine a 50% accuracy rate would lead to a ton of home runs. What's good in baseball for hitting, 30%, is terrible if it's your free throw percentage.

Deductive Reasoning starts with a general law and then applies that law to specific cases. LAW: All humans have DNA.

SPECIFIC: Joe Pellopi is a human.

CONCLUSION: Joe Pellopi has DNA.

One of the important distinctions between inductive and deductive reasoning is that deductive reasoning is a closed system, as opposed to the open, probabilistic system of inductive reasoning. In deductive reasoning, if the premises are true, the conclusion MUST be true—that's 100% guaranteed. Consider this formulation: A + B = B + A. Is this true for 3 + 2 = 2 + 3? Yes of course. How many cases does this apply to? That's right, an infinite number of cases. Mathematics, computer programming, and philosophy often use deductive reasoning because they are axiomatic disciplines—their operations are conducted according to pre-set laws.

There are two other important things to mention about deductive reasoning. First, it can be valid without being a true depiction of reality.

LAW: All aliens from planet Zork sing the blues.

SPECIFIC: Joe Pellopi is from planet Zork.

CONCLUSION: Joe Pellopi sings the blues.

Although this is a valid logical syllogism, its "truth" is mere fantasy. It does not apply to any world we recognize.

Secondly, it is important to mention the limit of deductive systems. The mathematician Kurt Gödel discovered that if a deductive system is large enough to account for natural numbers, it will generate a statement that is inconsistent with its laws or incomplete given those laws. In the Critical Thinking chapter, we will explore Gödel's Proof in more depth.

When you write an essay in which you make an argument, you will likely use both types of reasoning. You will develop your thesis from induction—looking at facts and sources of information and synthesizing your thesis from that material. Once you start writing though you will consider your thesis as a deductive law and work hard to ensure that all the material you include fits into

the logical system of your argument.

b. What Are Valid Arguments?

One of my favorite definitions of a thesis, or proposition (that which you are trying to prove in an argument), is given by the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein's definition of a proposition is that it is a depiction of reality. For the most part, arguments in The Academy concern (in a general sense) **truth-value** statements. A **truth-value** statement is a proposition that can be shown to be either true or false according to an evidential proof. In other words, it is a proposition that is supported by evidence arranged in a logically coherent way. For most of the arguments you write in The Academy, though, the proof you offer is not the 100% guaranteed surety of a deductive proof (no matter how much you think it is). Remember Wittgenstein, "depiction of reality." If you think about it at all, what "reality" is can be a very difficult question. Remember also, your ethos as a writer will also contribute to the reception of your argument by the audience.

The Academy is concerned with truth-value statements because one of its roles is to test propositions. Whether it's in a laboratory, or at a desk with a stack of books, academics are interested in proposing and testing propositions. Statements of belief, "I believe the universe sits on the back of a tortoise," are of little use in The Academy because they cannot be tested. Nor are subjective judgments, "I hate President Calvin Coolidge." Of course, belief statements and subjective judgments might be important to you, and certainly culture encourages us to make such statements, but if the statements cannot be tested by objective scholars seeking depictions of reality, then they have little worth being exchanged in The Academy. When we offer an **opinion**, we are offering a claim with no support or warrant. Opinions have no place in The Academy as well.

One way to test whether or not your claim is arguable is to check if there is a possibility for the statement to be wrong. In science, this is called the **falsifiability**. Take a subjective statement like, "Today I am happy." No one really has the standing to say, "No you're not." Or if you hold up a quarter and say, "This is a quarter." No one has any standing to say, "No it's not." In both of these cases, one a subjective statement and the other a statement of objective fact, there is no claim because there is no "false"—those statements are not capable of being proven false. That is what makes a statement arguable—you can imagine it being proven false. Statements of belief are not arguable themselves for the same reason.

Of course, some people make the claim that their position is fact, as in "It

is a fact that playing first person shooter games makes teenagers more prone to violence," but we must remember that it is not a fact until it is proven. In other words, an arguable claim that a proposition is a fact, is not a fact. Facts are facts 100% of the time.

c. Fallacies

In argument, oftentimes the persuader will use a logical trick that has no real logos value in order to persuade. When this happens, the persuader is using a fallacy. A logical fallacy is an error in logical thinking in service of persuasion. There are a huge number of fallacies listed in handbooks. We'll illustrate a few below, but always be on your guard, be ready to recognize fallacies in argument.

Begging the question–restating what the claim is without proving it: It is so hot because the temperature is so high. Note that what you are establishing in the subject (it is so hot) is merely restated rather than proven (because the temperature is so high) in the predicate.

Ad Hominem–attacking the speaker of the claim instead of the claim itself: Joe Pellopi is a stinky crude man in my math class. Therefore, when he says he has the right answer on a math test, he can't be right. Note that a judgment is being made about a claim–Joe's answer–based on Joe rather than his reasoning. The classical example of this was during the impeachment trial when Clinton was thought to be a bad president because he was an unethical fellow. Of course, you could make an argument about the fitness of such a fellow to be president without resorting to this fallacy.

Appeal to authority–relying on an authority's gravity to persuade. We see this all the time with athletes and celebrities shilling everything in ads. Just because Jordan was a great basketball player doesn't mean that the Ballpark Franks he represents are really good hot dogs. Do you remember, "I'm not a doctor but I play one on TV," being used in an ad? This is a pretty egregious example of such a fallacy.

Straw Man–in this fallacy you make a complex argument into a simple argument by focusing on what's easiest to claim. During the whole debate about welfare reform this fallacy was often in use. Someone would frequently bring up "The Welfare Queen," a woman who got a number of checks and drove a Cadillac. To be sure, everyone thinks that a Welfare Queen is a bad thing but that doesn't necessarily settle the welfare reform question. It was later discovered the Welfare Queen was a fictional creation.

Post Hoc Ergo Propter–this is Latin for, "after this therefore because of

this": Every time I wear my blue hat it rains. Today I will wear my blue hat; therefore, it will rain. Just because these events happen next to one another doesn't mean that one event is causing the other.

Hasty Generalization–s when you reach a conclusion based on too little evidence: Joe Pellopi is an Irishman and he's sloppy; therefore, all Irishmen are slobs. Obviously, this is much too little evidence to base a conclusion on.

Either/Or–this fallacy indicates that there are only two mutually exclusive positions relative to an issue when in reality the issue is much more complicate: America–love it or leave it. To be sure, if we don't like something about America, we can stay and work to change it for the better, but this fallacy would have us believe that if we are not unquestioningly patriotic we ought to leave the country.

d. Components of Arguments

A valid argument has three components: the **Claim, Support**, and the **Warrant**. The **claim** is the proposition you are trying to prove. The **support** is the evidence you marshal to prove your claim (we will discuss what constitutes valid support in the chapter on critical thinking). The **warrant** connects your support to your claim. The warrant is often an underlying assumption, unmentioned, that leads the reader to accept the thesis based on the support. For example.

CLAIM: *Joe Pellopi has no manners.*

SUPPORT: *He is eating his dinner with his hands.*

What is the warrant in this case? The warrant is the assumption that people with manners use utensils when they are eating. Since Mr. Pellopi uses no utensils, he has no manners. So, if we were to make the warrant explicit we may say, "People with manners use utensils when they eat. Mr. Pellopi is eating without utensils; therefore, he has no manners." That is the logical chain of reasoning. to prove the claim, a warrant connected to its support.

Do you see a problem with this warrant? Of course, Pellopi could be eating ribs or Ethiopian food which requires you to use your hands. When constructing your own arguments or reading the arguments of others, pay attention to the warrants. The assumptions that we make in connecting support to claims must be, themselves, valid.

e. Wittgenstein and Arrangement in Argument

Remember that Wittgenstein asserted that a proposition was a "depiction of

reality"? He also believed that the elements of an argument were akin to counters (game pieces) in a game. The game was successful only if the counters were arranged properly. Let me explain what that means using Wittgenstein's analogy.

Let's say that you wanted to make a claim about an essay written by a journalist, Joe Pellpopi, claiming that the effectiveness of community colleges ought to be measured in the same way that the effectiveness of businesses is measured. The title of the essay is, "What Is a College's Bottom Line?" You recognize this line of thinking as the claim of Neoliberalism. How would you arrange your counters (ideas) to make that claim?

First you would need to define Neoliberalism, then present its attributes. Next you would need to show how Pellopi's claim about community colleges follows the Neoliberal way of thinking. Of course, if you want to argue that a Neoliberal approach to community colleges is a positive or negative thing would require other counters (ideas) to arrange, such as, what are the consequences of organizing community colleges according to Neoliberal ideals?

Another way to look at Wittgenstein's insight is to think of a depiction of reality as an accurate picture, resemblance, of reality constructed as a puzzle. Only if all the pieces (ideas) are in the right places will that accurate picture emerge.

B. A Final Word about Purpose

Whenever possible when writing in response to an assignment, apply a principle I have used from the time I was a student to the present time when I teach: make the process work for you. Writing is an act of discovery and exploration. When you are given assignments, approach them as opportunities to explore ideas and subjects that excite you intellectually. Writing is difficult work—make that work work for you. Make sure that every time you write, the ultimate purpose is personal and intellectual growth.

Now that we have an idea of the purposes of writing and the kind of writing you'll be asked to do in The Academy, let's discover an efficient and effective way to construct essays.

II. How to Write an Essay

Now that you know about the rhetorical situation and the kinds of essays you'll be writing about in The Academy, it's time to get to the essence of the communicative act in The Academy—how to write a good essay.

We'll start again with classical rhetoric. When making a speech (much of classical rhetoric was a guide to effective speech-making) classical rhetoricians thought that the orator needed to go through five stages: Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, Delivery. I'll define each of these stages and then adapt them to the more contemporary rhetoric of writing.

The word "**Invention**" comes from the Latin word "invenire" which means "to come upon." For the classical rhetoricians speech-making began with the orator generating material to use in his or her speech. Using a deep, contemplative imagination, the orator first gathers the content, the substance of the speech. Then the orator organizes that material according to an **Arrangement** that will have the most profound effect on the audience. Once that material is generated and arranged, the orator matches the **Style** to the material and audience. Style includes metaphoric language, diction, allusions; in other words, the orator chooses a manner of speaking that will be the most persuasive. Consider it this way, a professor wouldn't use the same style of speaking to a Freshman Philosophy class as she would to a seminar with doctoral students.

In the **Memory** stage, the orator memorizes the speech for fluent delivery. When reading accounts of classic and medieval rhetoric, the memory stage is often described as being in deep meditation; it seemed to be a contemplative state of preparation. Orators used many mnemonic devices in order to commit to memory prodigious speeches, and this in turn helped to develop their imagination.

The **Delivery** stage is when the orator would present the speech to the audience, using the appropriate modulation in tone and volume. The delivery stage included hand and facial gestures as well.

For writing an essay using contemporary rhetoric, the five offices of classical rhetoric have been condensed into three recursive stages: **Invention**, **Drafting**, and **Revision.**

A. Invention

Invention is the first critical stage in the writing process. In this stage, you study your writing assignment carefully (in The Academy, many rhetorical situations are assigned to you) in order to discover what you are being asked to write. If the assignment requires research (more about those kinds of rhetorical situations later), then you should use the invention stage to narrow down your research focus.

There are many ways to generate ideas to write about in the invention stage. I'll discuss and provide examples of a handful of the most commonly used techniques.

Freewriting: Freewriting is when you set yourself a time limit, say five minutes or so, provide yourself a prompt, and then write whatever comes to your mind about that prompt. For example, let's say that your assignment was to write an essay about whether or not cell phones should be banned from classrooms. Your initial prompt might be something like: *Cell phones are a hazard in class because…* What follows would be whatever comes to your mind based on that prompt. The purpose of freewriting is to unlock your brain and get yourself, without second-guessing or procrastination, to write. Writing takes commitment and is hard work—it takes persistence. Freewriting is one simple way to generate material.

Looping: Looping is modified version of freewriting. One thing you'll discover quickly with freewriting is that the mind can very quickly move far afield from the original prompt. Looping is one way to avoid that wandering. When you practice looping, you freewrite for a brief period, then you look over the material you've generated. You take an idea from the first freewriting session and use that as a prompt for your next freewriting. Then you take an idea from the second freewrite and use that as a prompt for your next freewrite. You can do this as many times as is effective. Notice what happens in looping—you are focusing on promising ideas and then developing those ideas. As mentioned earlier, freewriting is effective for getting the juices flowing, but it has a tendency to drift; looping keeps the writer on task.

The Reporter's Questions: No matter what you are writing about, asking the reporter's questions—who, what, when, where, why, and how—are an effective place to begin. Let's try them out with the cell phone issue.

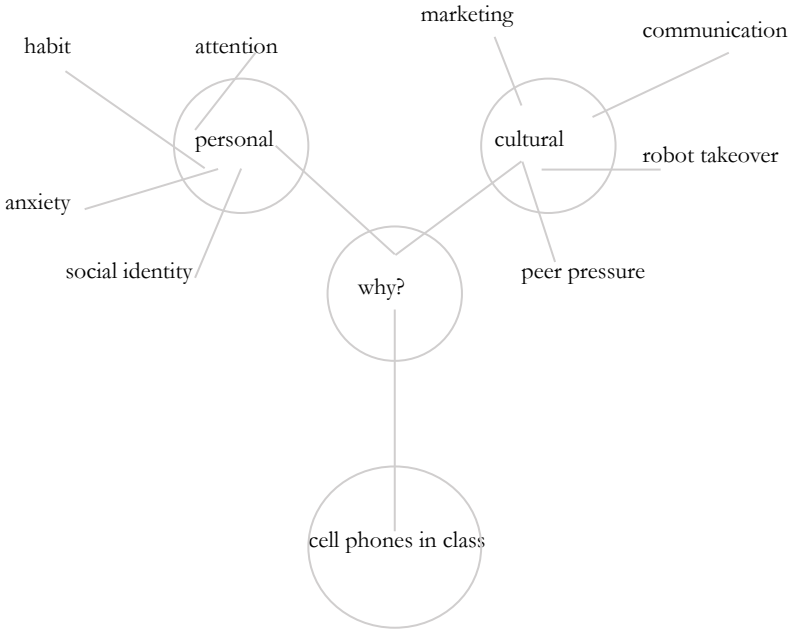
Who: Students in class, and teachers
What: Cell phones and all their apps
When: During class
Where: In The Academy

Why: Social conditioning, inattentiveness, cultural programming, robot conspiracy

How: Institutional ban, let students text, keep students busy so they can't be distracted.

You'll notice in the example above that Why and How lead to multiple possibilities. Where there are multiple answers, there are multiple opportunities for paper topics.

Clustering: Clustering, or idea mapping, is a visual way to generate ideas. You make the main idea a hub, and then ancillary ideas as spokes from the hub. Each ancillary idea, though, can be its own mini-hub with its own spokes. Using clustering as a way to invent material also helps you begin to develop and organize the material you generate.



As you can see, as the ideas are developed, they are organized into sub-categories. In this example, the first ideas developed are the reasons why students look at cell phones in class. Two major reasons emerged—personal reasons and cultural reasons. Note that each of the individual reasons under each category can also serve as hubs for further development.

Listing: Listing is the invention technique that I frequently use. After I have finished research, I list all the things I want to say. Then I cluster that list, putting ideas in relation to each other in order to produce a suitable arrangement for the material.

There are many other techniques for invention. The ones included here have been used successfully by students. You MUST begin with the invention stage. In The Academy, it is nearly impossible to sit at the computer and write an essay from the top of the page and the top of your head. You must have a roadmap before you begin the drafting stage. Recall classical rhetoric—immediately following the invention stage is the arrangement stage. For our purposes, invention ends in arrangement. Many people use outlines to arrange their material. I use lists or idea maps. Whatever you choose to use, YOU MUST HAVE A PLAN BEFORE YOU START TO DRAFT. In the following section, I'll describe a simple and effective way to invent and arrange your essays before drafting.

1. A Simple and Efficient Plan for Arrangement

I learned this way to invent and arrange during a stint in graduate school as a commercial writer. I would be hired by businesses to ghostwrite articles for them to be published in their trade journals. At first, I had a difficult time writing in a style that was suitable for magazines. The problem was that I was used to the long paragraphs of academic writing and those paragraphs were out of place for the breezy writing style of magazines.

What I did to improve my drafts is something that film directors do all the time—they envision, at all times, what the scene they are filming will look like when it is on the screen in the movie theater. In other words, they keep a constant focus on the final product, even when in the preliminary stages. For me that meant setting the margins of my word processing file exactly as wide as the margin for each column of prose in the magazine. In this way, the number of characters per line as I drafted, would be the exact number of characters per line in the final product. In that way, as I wrote, I would see what my article would look like to the reading public.

a. Paragraphs

How does this work for you when writing an essay for The Academy? Before you learn this technique we need to discuss **paragraphs**.

First, understand that paragraphs are the basic building blocks of your essay.

They are the prime movers of your purpose no matter what that purpose is. Secondly, you must understand that, typically, paragraphs develop **one main idea**. When you were in secondary school, you probably learned about **topic sentences**. A topic sentence is to a paragraph what a thesis is for the essay—it succinctly states what the paragraph is going to develop. For example (topic sentence in italics):

> *Internet trolls most likely suffered from lack of attention as children.* How else could you explain their unceasing need for attention? We know that children, when needing attention will often resort to negative behavior in order to receive it. Internet trolls, under the disguise of anonymity, respond to posts with cruel, insensitive, and outlandish comments not as expressions of their personal views, but as a way to elicit negative responses from the more sincere members of a commentary community. Like a screaming child, they demand that others pay attention to them. Though they are adults, they seek the attention they never got as children.

As you can see, the topic sentence makes a promise (as theses do) that they rest of the paragraph will fulfill.

You should note that in The Academy, topic sentences are not a requirement. An essay that includes a topic sentence for every paragraph will read as if it were written by a machine. Style dictates that the presentation of the material matches the purpose and, unless the purpose demands the rigid construction of topic sentences for each paragraph (technical manuals for example), do not think you need to construct your essay that way. What is not negotiable, though, is that each paragraph needs to represent one main, developed idea.

b. Using Key Words to Arrange

One way to check if your paragraph does indeed represent one main idea is to try to reduce that idea to a key word and key phrase. (This technique is discussed in Joseph Williams's book, *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*). Indeed, this works in reverse as well; in the invention stage reduce each idea you will be discussing in the essay into a key word and phrase.

Once you are used to thinking of an essay in terms of its building blocks, paragraphs, you will be amazed, if you keep the final product in mind, how easy it is to complete the invention and arrangement stage. For example, say that you are asked to write a five page essay on the causes of the first Iraqi War. Generally speaking, there are three to five paragraphs per page of an essay. Therefore, the sum total of paragraphs you will need for the essay is approximately 20 paragraphs in all. Take away one paragraph for the introduction and conclusion (special paragraphs we'll discuss in a bit). That leaves approximately 18 paragraphs left for the body. Now before you start the invention stage, keep this

number in mind. As you do your research you know that you'll have to generate 18 ideas relate to the causes of Operation Desert Storm. That sounds doable.

In addition, using this technique—keeping an eye on the final product throughout—helps you in the arrangement stage. After you do your research and isolate 18 related ideas to discuss, you can arrange those 18 key word or phrases in the order that you will treat them in your essay. So you have an arrangement scheme for the drafting stage. This technique makes the process of writing efficient because throughout you are working toward a final product that you have considered and kept in mind every step of the way. No preliminary work is wasted.

2. Introductions and Conclusions

What you learned in elementary school that an essay has three parts—an introduction, body, and conclusion—still applies to writing essays in The Academy. Introductions and conclusions serve a special purpose in the essay different from the body.

The **introduction** to your essay should grab your reader's attention and make them want to read more. It should give your reader an idea of what's ahead in the essay, and, most importantly, it ought to indicate what the purpose of the essay is. Not all essays require a thesis in the introduction. Why? Because we have defined a thesis as the claim an argument is trying to prove and not all essays have as their purpose to prove a claim. For example, self-expressive essays do not require a thesis statement but remember, all essays should make their purpose known early in the essay, preferably in the introduction.

If you look up, "How to write a conclusion," I'm sure that you would generate a list of specific strategies such as: "re-state the thesis," or "ask a question," or "call your readers to action." These can be effective strategies but their specificity ignores the general sense of what the conclusion ought to accomplish.

My theory of conclusions is as follows: When you write an essay, you are creating a home-made intellectual world for your reader to reside in while they read your words. Your **conclusion** then should be the place in your essay where you give something *from* the essay to your readers to take with them when they leave your world and re-enter their own.

With this principle of conclusion, you may want to re-state the thesis, ask a question, or call to action, but that is not all. The conclusion is not a tactic but a strategy and should answer the question: What do you want to leave your readers from your essay? Think of the conclusion as the essay's gift to the reader for reading.

B. Drafting

Once you have your scheme for arrangement, it is time to draft your essay. This stage is where difficulties often arise for a simple reason—**writing takes effort!**

Any number of writing manuals will give you advice on the best way to approach drafting—from the time of day to the locale where you do your writing. That is all fine and maybe even helpful, but the truth is you have to sit down and concentrate in following your arrangement. There are no shortcuts and numerous diversions. In the time between I wrote the title "Drafting" and this sentence, I've checked my email, petted my dog, and looked to see if the oven has reached its preheated temperature. That's a lot of diversion for only five sentences.

Yet here I sit, again, tending to the draft of this handbook. I have a mantra I tell my students, "one word in front of the other." That is the only way to write. If you are always thinking about the page length or are counting words constantly

to find out how much more you have to say (not a good idea) you'll find it very difficult to complete a draft. Concentrate on the word in front of you, then the next word, and the next until you have a sentence. Keep at it until you have a paragraph. With concentration and effort, you'll discover that you have finished the…hold on…I've got to check the oven.

C. Revision

Before we discuss the stage of revision in the writing process, let's make one critical distinction—writing is not a linear process (1,2,3 and done)—but is a **recursive** process. A recursive process is a process that can be broken down into sub-processes that may loop over each other. In programming, think of a routine that is constructed from a series of sub-routines. To illustrate with writing: imagine you are in the drafting stage and you write, "we ran from the cops." You stop and decide that "ran" is not a descriptive enough verb, so you think of a better verb and come up with "fled." You then delete "ran" and replace it with "fled." Can you detect the sub-routines here? You are drafting, then inventing, then revising, then return to drafting.

Two resources that can help you revise your essay are your instructor and the tutors in MACC's LARCs. If you have a draft of your essay finished before it's due, bring it to your instructor during his or her office hours and have them give you directions for revision. For sure, your instructor knows what he or she is looking for from you. MACC's LARCs are staffed with tutors skilled in various subject areas. Go over your essays with tutors in order to develop a plan for revision. Another set of eyes is always helpful when looking over written work.

When revising your essay it is a commonplace to say that you start with the macro issues, purpose, organization, paragraphing, and finish with the micro issues like spelling and punctuation (i.e..proofreading). **Revision** is more than proofreading it is a re-visioning of all aspect of your essay.

There are a number of effective strategies for revising your essay but I'll tie our strategy to MACC's global communications rubric—which is how we as an institution check to see whether or not our students are generating successful writing. The rubric is organized according to outcomes. Note that some of these outcomes apply only to argumentative essays.

The first outcome is general and focuses on effectively communicating your purpose in language that is appropriate to The Academy

Outcome IA: The student will demonstrate effective written and/or

oral communication considering audience and situation through invention, arrangement, drafting, revision, and delivery.

1. Is the essay's purpose clear, complex, and explicitly expressed?
2. Is the text is unified – each element effectively serving the purpose?
3. Is the text appropriately directed to an academic audience?
4. Is the language concrete and specific, as opposed to general and abstract?

The second outcome applies to argumentative essays and focuses on the effectiveness of the logic used in constructing the argument.

Outcome IB. The student will construct logical and ethical arguments with evidence to support the conclusions.

1. Does the text contain an explicit, concisely expressed, and original claim?
2. Is the claim buttressed by effective and varied support?
3. Are the warrants, stated or assumed, reasonable and free of fallacies?

The third outcome applies to the writing adhering to grammatical, usage, and stylistic principles.

Outcome IC. The student will conform to the rules of Standard English.

1. Does the text contain correct grammar?
2. Is the spelling correct?
3. Is the punctuation appropriate?

The fourth outcome concerns the effective synthesis of the essay's material.

Outcome ID. The student will analyze, synthesize, and evaluate a variety of course material and points of view.

1. Does the text include a variety of appropriate material?
2. Has that material been appropriately analyzed?
3. Has that analysis led to a synthesis directly related to the essay's purpose?

The fifth outcome concerns the ethos of the writer and how well the protocols of citation have been followed.

Outcome IE. The student will accept academic responsibility for all work regarding issues of copyright, plagiarism, and fairness.

1. *Is the text free of plagiarism?*
2. *Is the text free of copyright violations?*
3. *Are the sources properly cited in the appropriate citation format?*
4. *Is there a citation page?*

1. Final Thoughts on Revision

In a poem I once wrote, I was thinking about the relationship between writing and our moral life. When we err morally, we can determine to do better next time, but we cannot change the past—our actions are inscribed in the book of time. When we write, though, our texts can accommodate as much time as we have to put into them. In addition, if we make a mistake, we can fix it—we can go back in time.

The line I wrote for my poem was, "Revision means forgiven." Think about your text as an opportunity to create the most complete ethical act. And if you make a mistake, that's ok, you can fix it; revision means forgiven.

2. Delivery

Do you want to know one key element in establishing ethos as a writer? **Turn the assignment in on time in the manner the instructor determined.** That may be in a Dropbox set up in the Learning Management System, or in hard copy to be handed in during class. If the instructor requests that the essay be handed in hardcopy, do not email it. Follow the instructions.

If there are special instructions for delivery, abide by those. MLA format for essays without ancillary material (like appendices or works cited pages) do not require a cover sheet and are to be formatted as illustrated on the following page (not to scale).

3. Sample Essay Format

header ½ inch from top

Barrett 1

Mike Barrett
Professor Pellopi
LAL101, 9am
24 February, 2019

Title centered

Double spaced, 1 inch margins

Neoliberalism & Community Colleges

Cecilii libellum, quem de Sublimitate composuit, perpendentibus nobis (ut scis) una, Posthumi Terentiane charissime, humilioris stili esse visus est quam postularet argumenti materia, et [3/5] praecipuas res minime attingere, neque multum utilitatis (quam maxime debet scriptor petere) legentibus afferre.

Deinde cum in omni artis *alicujus* tractatione duae res requiruntur, (prior quidem, ut ostendas quid sit subjectum; secunda vero, quoad ordinem *secunda,* at quoad vim potior, ut ostendas quomodo et quibus rationibus hoc ipsum sit a nobis acquirendum), nihilominus Cecilius, quid sit Sublimitas, innumeris exemplis.