# ENG 2322
## Project #2: Virtual Discourse Community

Your second project is adapted from Gaillet and Eble's "Primary Research and Writing: People, Places, and Spaces." In this project, you will once again conduct an observation (termed ethnography) in order to learn more about a discourse community. This time, however, we will also be using secondary sources to help us delve deeper into our understanding of a community and the way it impacts our lives. Here is the prompt:

> This assignment asks you to observe a digital community and write a 4-5 page argumentative essay about an online discourse community. Your observation will focus on a form of social media—Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, or Instagram, for example. Your goal is to collect qualitative and quantitative information about how people use social media to interact in a digital community and to write an essay wherein your findings add to the current research on your chosen community.

> To begin, launch a review of the literature related to your digital community. As Rosenberg noted, think of this step as "participating in a conversation" about your topic (2011, p. 212). You must include <u>at least three</u> scholarly sources (e.g., peer reviewed journal articles, etc.) in your essay, but you will want to read more to determine your **research question.** What question(s) do you have about your digital discourse community after reading multiple sources? What kinds of problems/issues/concerns circulate concerning this community? How can your observation help to answer those questions? Your sources can guide the development of your research question or vice versa; you may also use your research question to locate your sources. It all depends on the knowledge you bring to this project. Either way, it's important that your research question is determined before you complete your observation. Keep in mind you will complete an **annotated bibliography** documenting your three sources (and the sources in your annotated bibliography are the same ones you will use in your essay).

> Next, for one day (or more, if you like, but you must do at least one day) you will conduct an observation of a public space online. Because observing requires the ability to make objective judgments, you may only read your friends' posts, view their photos, etc. You may not comment on anyone's posts, post anything yourself, or "like" anyone's status, photo, etc. If you wish, post a status the day before saying you are taking a 24-hour social media break. What posts appear in your Newsfeed? What photographs do people upload? What comments do people make? Which posts are the most popular and receive the most comments and/or likes?

> For this observation, you need to complete another **observation log** (double-entry notebook): on one side, record "Observations" or quantitative data; on to the other, "Thoughts" or qualitative data. These notes can (and probably should) be handwritten so as not to distract you from your observation. Make sure you record the date day of the week, and times when posts are made. After your observation, read back over your two column notes and use them to write a one-to two page observation report.

Now that all of your research (secondary and primary) is completed, you will begin drafting your **essay**. What are your thoughts about how people interact in a digital community? Which argument will you make and how will you support it? Use specific details from your observation [avoiding everyone's real name, of course] to support your ideas.

The purpose of this assignment is multifaceted: (1) To develop your understanding of <u>digital</u> discourse communities by analyzing both <u>explicit</u> and <u>implicit</u> manifestations of culture within a discourse community. (2) To continue developing skills related to observation and field notes. (3) Reflect on how membership in a discourse community contributes to a life of significance and worth. (4) Reinforce prior knowledge of locating and synthesizing secondary sources. (5) Build a foundation for further primary research techniques.

**Primary Learning Objectives**

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| • Determine appropriate rhetorical techniques to apply in response to rhetorical situations |
| • Use the writing process to discover and reassess ideas |
| • Compose valid arguments in multiple modalities |
| • Support arguments with appropriate types of evidence |
| • Evaluate sources for accuracy and authority |
| • Navigate print and digital repositories of information |
| • Use the rhetorical situation to determine the appropriate citation system |
| • Describe how inquiry contributes to a life of significance and worth |

| Project #2 Essay Rubric | |
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| The author wrote an essay that meets the **assignment criteria** in terms of subject matter. The ideas presented are on topic and are appropriate for the assignment. | _____/15 |
| **Introduction:** The author captured the reader's attention and provided enough information for the reader to understand the thesis statement. | _____/10 |
| The author crafted a **thesis/claim** (which is underlined) in response to the assignment and it was appropriately placed. | _____/10 |
| The author provided necessary **background information** and/or explained specialized terminology. | _____/5 |
| Each **body paragraph was** well developed and supported the **topic sentence**; the author provided both <u>relevant</u> and <u>adequate</u> support for the thesis. | _____/10 |
| The author integrated quotes from their **observation log** into the essay to provide evidence for their argument. | _____/10 |
| The author effectively wrapped up the essay and restated the thesis in the **conclusion.** | _____/5 |
| The APA **References** page was formatted correctly and included at least three scholarly sources. | _____/5 |
| The essay contained several well-chosen **in-text citations** (direct quote, | _____/5 |

(Note: The leftmost column of the rubric contains the vertical labels "CONTENT & STRUCTURE" spanning the first seven rows and "...TION & FOR..." spanning the last two rows.)

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| | paraphrase, or summary) that adhered to APA guidelines (including signal phrase, quotation marks, quoted material, and parenthetical citation). | |
| | The essay was **formatted** according to APA guidelines. | _____/5 |
| OTHER | The essay met the **length** requirement. | _____/5 |
| | The essay was carefully **proofread and edited**. | _____/10 |
| | The author crafted a compelling and appropriate **title** for the essay. | _____/5 |
| | Total | ___ /100 |