

**Responding to Uncertainty through Contextualizing Learning Outcomes**  
**Sarah Seeley**

**WRIT 2110: Strategic Writing > "The Snapshot"**

**General Overview.** Since a shift to distance learning is a big shift with many possible impacts, it is important that you understand the changes that are coming our way. In aid of building this understanding, I will be presenting what I am calling a "Snapshot." I am calling it this because the document offers you a centralized snapshot of our collective work for the remainder of the term. It is my hope that this document will stand as a "one-stop-shop" type of resource.

That said, please understand: The information presented here is subject to change with reasonable advance notice. I want to get things ironed out and back to "normal" as soon as possible, but this is a big transition. We need to keep our expectations in check for a little while as everyone adjusts and troubleshoots!

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**I. Learning Outcomes.** In order to be fully transparent about our objectives in the coming weeks, I want to revisit our learning outcomes (LO's) as listed on our original syllabus. In the chart that follows, I have listed each LO and matched it with the associated activities, deliverables, and modes of assessment. I am doing this because I think it is important to explicitly link "the work" we are doing (discussions, peer reviews, etc.) to the overarching goals of the class. Even though we are experiencing a qualitative shift that impacts many facets of teaching and learning, our overarching goals do remain the same. I hope we can all take some comfort in this transparency and consistency.

| <b>Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate the ability to...</b> | <b>Opportunities for satisfying this LO:</b>   | <b>How will this LO be assessed?</b>  |
|--|--|---|
| #1 Write focused, audience appropriate arguments.  | 1. Writing and revising Essay #1<br>2. Writing and revising Essay #2<br>3. Writing and revising Essay #3 | This LO will be assessed in terms of your Portfolio grade (70% overall).  |
| #2 Revise and improve both the content and form of their own writing.                    | 1. Participating in Peer Review Workshops<br>2. Illustrating evidence of revision in your Portfolio      | This LO will be assessed in terms of your Portfolio grade (70% overall) and your Participation grade (30% overall). |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>#3 Write in different genres, responding to a variety of rhetorical contexts.</p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Writing and revising Essay #1</li> <li>2. Writing and revising Essay #2</li> <li>3. Writing and revising Essay #3</li> <li>4. Submitting the all of the Peer Reviews that <u>you</u> write during the online period (not the ones you completed previously).</li> </ol> | <p>This LO will be assessed in terms of your Portfolio grade (70% overall) and in terms of your Participation grade (30%) overall.</p> |
| <p>#4 Build arguments based on research and analysis.</p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Writing and revising Essay #3</li> </ol>  | <p>This LO will be assessed in terms of your Portfolio grade (70% overall).</p>  |
| <p>#5 Cite sources according to general academic conventions, which includes knowing when and how to integrate summary, paraphrase, and direct quotation.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extending our in-class critiques in order to use sources purposefully and with integrity in your own writing.</li> </ol>  | <p>This LO will be assessed in terms of your Portfolio grade (70% overall).</p>  |

**II. Changes to Peer Review.** We have three more Peer Review Workshops scheduled (3/30, 4/6, and 4/16). Since you will complete this activity remotely, I will assign everyone three other people to work with. I will explain the logistics fully when the time comes.

**The major change is that you will now submit your peer review write-ups at the end of the semester.**

They will be submitted with your portfolio, but they will be evaluated **separately** from your portfolio (as a part of your participation grade). For example, let's say that I was assigned to peer review with Colleague A, Colleague B, and Colleague C for each of these three workshops. This means that I would write NINE peer reviews in total (3 people x 3 workshops = 9). In addition to writing the feedback and emailing it to the appropriate individuals, I would also save the files so I could eventually bundle them into one PDF and submit them at the end of the term.

**Completing these review write-ups gives you an important opportunity for meeting Learning Outcomes 2 + 3.**

**III. Participation: expectations, opportunities and assessment, logistics.** Since 30% of your total course grade is assessed in terms of participation, it is important that you are aware of my expectations, your opportunities, and course assessment parameters.

**Participation: expectations.**

I expect everyone to continue participating thoughtfully and meaningfully during the distance learning period.

### Participation: opportunities and assessment.

1. **Peer Review.** I will assign each of you three classmates to “swap” with for all three Peer Review Workshops. I will also offer very detailed instructions for completing these activities when the time comes. Writing up peer reviews and emailing with your partners will be an important participation opportunity for two main reasons:
  - It is an essential technique for developing a critical eye. In using your critical eye to help others, you also make it easier to turn that eye back onto your own writing. These activities help you meet every single one of our learning outcomes.
  - You will bundle all nine peer reviews you write into a single PDF document and submit them on 4/27. Submitting this document supports your Participation grade (30% of the course total).
2. **Discussion Threads.** I will start a discussion thread for each of your assigned readings. For example, the first one will go live on Monday, 3/23 for a discussion around Portfolio 2. I expect that I expect everyone to 1.) post at least once on every discussion thread that I create, and 2.) reply to anyone who comments on one of your posts.  
Guidelines:

- You want to go beyond only making comments like, “I agree with what’s already been said.”
- Instead, you could begin by referencing what someone else has said (if you want), but then you should expand on that idea.
- Or, you might take up opportunities to shape the discussion by being the first one to respond to my discussion questions.
- You may also advance your own line of thought regardless of whether it relates to one of my discussion questions.
- You can, and should, also comment on and/or “like” others’ posts.
- Note: there will only be three Discussion Threads (all of them in Week 11).

### Participation: logistics.

- For posting on discussion threads, you will use the “Posts” feature on Edmodo. I doubt you need it, but I’ve included an annotated screenshot on the next page in order to illustrate the process.



**Dr. Seeley** posted to **Theory of Composition**

Teacher  at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

2 minutes ago · 

Here is where I've started the discussion thread by listing a series of questions that offer you a starting point for engaging with the reading.

Here are the discussion questions related to Portfolio X:

1. Do the title and the first paragraph of the PCD catch your attention? Discuss why or why not, and offer suggestions for improvement.
2. Do you think the title, subtitle, and first paragraph of the JSTOR Daily essay will hook the intended audience? If so, give a sense of why. If not, list some suggestions for revision.
3. Read for a res... [More](#)

 Like

 1 Comment

 Share



**Dr. Gerstle**

I have no intention of engaging with any of these questions.

Like • 1 Reply • a few seconds ago

Here are some users posting on the thread by using the reply features. But remember: you want to make better posts than these folks :)



**Dr. Seeley**

You are not a good classroom citizen.

Like • a few seconds ago



Write a reply...



Cancel

Reply



Write a comment...

#### IV. Course Content: location, manner of presentation, opportunities for posing questions

- **Content: location.** I have created a folder that's named "Distance Learning." Once you click to open that folder, you will see additional folders that are named "Week 11," "Week 12," etc. In addition, you will find another copy of this document, "The Snapshot," for your reference.
  - All content (workshop prompts, lectures, etc.) will be placed in these folders.
  - You will, however, carry on accessing all readings in their original locations in the Readings folders.
- **Content: manner of presentation.** I plan to be posting content in two forms: 1.) Word documents that present writing-related information (e.g. Writing Guides, Workshop Prompts), and 2.) PowerPoint slides that present lecture information (e.g. Counterargument).
  - All content will always be posted by the morning of the day we have "class." For example, I will create the Discussion Thread for Portfolio 2 and post the Intros and Theses Lecture in the morning on 3/23.
- **Content: opportunities for posing questions.** With the dominance of email as a mode of communication, most of us already experience a blurring of the boundaries between "work time" and "non-work time." In order to maintain that boundary during this distance learning period, we need to have clear cut parameters for our online communications. These are your opportunities for posing questions:
  - **Feel free to email me any time.** That said, please know that I typically only respond to email Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM. In addition, it is my goal to respond to all email within 24 hours.
  - **Please do not use the Edmodo messenger.** You will get a MUCH quicker reply from me via **email** : )
  - **Office Hours.** As always, I have office hours on Wednesdays 11:00 - 1:00. If you email me during office hours, you can expect a quick reply. I will also be offering video conferencing via Zoom during office hours. If you want to set up a Zoom meeting, you will have to email me directly with a request. My office hours are always organized on a first-come-first-served basis. The same holds true for the online context: there will be a queue for both email responses and Zoom meetings.

#### V. Writing and Revision: expectations and opportunities for obtaining feedback

- **Writing and Revision: Expectations.**
  - I expect that you will engage thoughtfully in independent research, writing, and revision and use this transition to distance learning as an opportunity to work hard on your Portfolios. **Our read-write-think-revise cycle will be the key to your continued success!**

- I expect that you will engage thoughtfully and critically in the peer review process. This includes offering appropriate feedback, being open minded toward the feedback you receive, and allowing that feedback to shape your thinking and revisions.

- **Writing and Revision: Opportunities for obtaining feedback**

- I am available to read your writing and offer written feedback via email during the following timeframes:
  - During class time on Mondays and Thursdays.
  - How to seek written feedback: email me a draft and indicate in the body of the email what kind of feedback you are looking for.
- I am available to discuss your writing and offer oral feedback via Zoom during the following timeframes:
  - By appointment during office hours: 11 – 1 on Wednesdays.
- While I am available to answer general questions Mon – Fri, 8 – 5 (as indicated above), I will only be offering feedback on essays during class time and office hours. Please plan accordingly. This means, for example, if you request feedback via email on a Tuesday afternoon, you will not receive it until Wednesday during office hours (at the earliest). Also, note that you would not normally get this kind of individual attention during class time. It is a positive thing for you.

**VI. Daily Schedule.** In what follows, I offer a schedule of our daily activities and writing benchmarks. I've annotated the first day on the schedule because I want to be sure that we are all clear on what our collective responsibilities look like. Let me know if you have questions about this schedule.

