Ecology, Environment, & the Anthropocene

Term Project Guidelines

The major independent assignment of this course is the production of a creative work that is informed by research into a topic or topics that are directly related to course content. This *Term Project* will be developed throughout the semester via an incremental process of planning, drafting, and refinement. This process emphasizes thoughtful conceptualization as a means of preparing to write and make.

Project objectives:

1. Research scientific work that is related to one or more of the *Key Questions* that form the basis of this course:

   ☐ Your topic must be related to one or more of the *Key Questions* listed in the course syllabus. While your project <u>need not</u> directly answer any of these questions, it must clearly be related to one or more of these questions.

   ☐ This term project is designed to allow you to become more knowledgeable about a subject that you are interested in. It is recommended that you carefully choose the subject matter that will become the focus of your term project. While your subject must relate to the course content, a great diversity of topics could satisfy the requirements of this project.

   ☐ Using library and internet research, you will obtain at least SEVEN (7) related sources of scientific information (your "source list") that are strongly connected to your chosen topic.

   ☐ You will present your list of sources in annotated form, providing a brief summary of relevant information and ideas found in each source.

2. Develop a proposal for using a creative medium to incorporate important ideas uncovered in your research:

   ☐ Through the development and presentation of a formal proposal, you will identify particular scientific ideas related to your chosen topic that will be incorporated into your creative work. While it is fine to have a particular medium (or even ideas for how to use that medium) in mind, the major focus of the proposal is to decide what ideas, concepts, and information will inspire your creative work. You should also identify the intended audience for your work.

   ☐ You will produce a draft *Proposal* that will be revised based on feedback from your classmates. You also have the option of making two revisions: first one in response to feedback from the *Writing & Tutorial Center*, and then another in response to feedback from your classmates.

3. Design and complete a creative work that incorporates important ideas uncovered in your research:

   ☐ This assignment is intended to complement your major studies, so any media that you might employ for other classes is fair game: digital art, websites, flash, animation, jewelry, an advertisement, sculpture, film/video, short stories, poems, critical analysis, graphic design, photography, painting, fashion design, architectural blueprints, prints, 'zines, interior design, illustrations, or industrial design.

   ☐ Before committing to hours of implementing your creative ideas, you will make a "sketch" of your planned work to present to your instructor.

   ☐ While you will need to submit your work to your instructor, it will be returned to you within two weeks of submission.

4. Explain your *Term Project* in written form:
   - ☐ A *Project Summary* provides you with the opportunity to explain how you incorporated scientific information into your term project.
   - ☐ You will produce a draft *Summary* that will be revised based on feedback from your instructor. You also have the option of making two revisions: first one in response to feedback from the *Writing & Tutorial Center*, and then another in response to feedback from your instructor.

Summary of assignments and due dates:

Assignment to be completed	Date Due (at 11:59 pm EST unless otherwise noted)	Points	% of Total
Initial Source List	February 27th, 2019	10	5.6%
Draft Term Project Proposal	March 20th or 21st, 2019* (due in class!)	10	5.6%
Term Project Proposal	April 4th, 2019	40	22.2%
Term Project Sketch	April 11th, 2019	10	5.6%
Draft Project Summary	April 18th, 2019	10	5.6%
Term Project & Term Project Summary	April 30th, 2019	100	55.6%
TOTAL		180	100.0%

* This due date is inflexible: if you don't bring your draft proposal to class on this day, you will receive a zero for this component of your *Coursework* grade (the *Term Project Proposal Workshop* that you will participate in during this class meeting is worth ~3% of your <u>final</u> course grade).

Component Steps for Completing the Project:

Initial Source List:

The first step in completing your project is to identify sources you can use to inform your *Term Project.* Using search resources in the library and on the web, identify and obtain at least seven (7) sources that provide relevant <u>scientific</u> information and ideas about your chosen subject. This page may help you find valuable sources: http://www.christopherxjjensen.com/teaching/for-students/#Research-res. You are required to use at least one (1) book found in the Pratt library in your source list, and primary scientific literature will be valued over secondary or tertiary sources (especially when your source is a website). After you have identified the sources you will use, create a source list that:

- briefly describes the subject matter that will be the focus of your research and makes it clear how this topic is related to one or more of the *Key Questions* that form the basis of this course
- makes a complete citation (see *Works Cited Page* below) for each source
- provides for each source a list <u>explicitly identifying</u> the "scientific facts" and "scientific ideas" found in that source (this converts your *Bibliography* into an *Annotated Bibliography*)

Term Project Proposal:

Produce at least three (3) and no more than four (4) pages (between 1500-2000 words) of **single-spaced** text (note that this is the only exception to the MLA format). The font should be 12 point, margins should be 1" on all sides.

The purpose of submitting the *Term Project Proposal* is to distill the research you have performed into specific, clear subject matter that will be incorporated into the project. It might be valuable to imagine that you are seeking funding to support the completion of your project; your proposal should establish both *what* you want to create and *why* the work will be valuable. The proposal should cover:

- what subject matter your project will focus on;
- what you have learned through research about this subject matter;
- what scientific ideas you would like to incorporate into a creative project (please identify these ideas underlying explicitly via your *Project Table*, see below); and
- how you imagine you might incorporate scientific ideas into your creative work, who you envision as your potential audience, and what forms the creative work might take (please propose at least two different concepts for your creative work).

To assure that it is entirely clear what ideas you plan to incorporate into your project, your *Term Project Proposal* will be accompanied by a *Project Table* in the following format:

Scientific Idea: (stated as a clear sentence that answers a how and/or why question)	**How this idea could be incorporated into a creative work:**
Scientific Idea #1	Explanation of how scientific idea #1 could be incorporated into one of several potential concepts for a creative work…
Scientific Idea #2	Explanation of how scientific idea #2 could be incorporated into one of several potential concepts for a creative work…
… and so on	… and so on

The main text of your proposal should make direct and clear reference to what is contained in your *Project Table*. This table does not count towards the word minimum for the proposal.

Each *Term Project Proposal* will also be accompanied by an *Annotated Bibliography* that provides for each source not only a complete citation but also a short paragraph summarizing what information/ ideas/concepts this source contributed to your project. See below for exact formatting guidelines.

Term Project Proposal Workshop:

During Week 08 of class you will bring a printed copy of your *Draft Term Project Proposal* to class. You will be required to give feedback to several other students in class, and in return they will provide feedback on your *Draft Proposal*. Unlike other components of the *Term Project*, there is a hard-and-fast deadline for this workshop: you must bring your *Proposal* to class during Week 08, as the workshop represents the *Coursework* for this class session.

During the workshop, your classmates will write comments, suggestions, and questions on your printed *Draft Proposal*. You will then scan this "workshopped" version of your draft and submit it via the *LMS*. Please make sure to scan in color, as your instructor needs to see the color-coded comments corresponding to each student.

Term Project Sketch:

Chances are that you will spend a fair amount of time executing the creative work that will make up your *Term Project*. To make sure that this time is well spent, you will submit a "sketch" of the work you plan to execute. What constitutes a "sketch" will vary based on the kind of work you plan to do, but all sketches should include:

- a description of what medium or media you plan to use to create your work;

- a clear and specific plan for what you are going to be creating; and

- an explanation of how the work will incorporate the scientific ideas identified in your *Term Project Proposal*.

Feel free to discuss with your instructor what form your "sketch" should take.

Final Term Project:

The overall goal of the *Term Project* is to produce a creative work that incorporates important ideas and information related to the *Key Questions* of the course. There are many subjects that can successfully serve as the focus of the project, and there are many ways of incorporating science into creative work. Remember that while the work must express scientific concepts, it need not do so on its own: the *Project Summary* can serve to explain subtle or abstract ideas that are present in the creative work. Because the final *Term Project* may take a great variety of creative forms, different students will deliver their *Final Projects* in different ways:

- If your project is purely digital, it can be directly uploaded to the *LMS*. Some movie projects may exceed the upload limit I have set on the LMS (100 MB), and should be uploaded to a film-streaming site such as YouTube or Vimeo (please provide the URL video in the "notes" section of the *Final Term Project* submission page on the *LMS*).

- If your project is analog, you should upload a set of at least six (6) portfolio-quality images of your work to the *LMS* as a single PDF file. In addition, you must deliver the project to your instructor. If your project is an installation and cannot be delivered, you must arrange a time for your instructor to visit your project.

Term Project Summary:

Produce at least two (2) and no more than three (3) pages (between 1000-1500 words) of **single-spaced** text (note that this is the only exception to the MLA format). The font should be 12 point, margins should be 1" on all sides.

All students will submit a *Term Project Summary* that includes an *Annotated Bibliography*. The *Term Project Summary* should:

- provide general scientific background required to understand the project;

- describe and explain the scientific information, ideas, and concepts that were incorporated into the project, using citations to indicate which sources provided particular content;

- discuss how particular creative methods were used to incorporate the information/ideas/concepts into the work; and

- identify the intended audience for the work and explain the impact that the work is designed to have on that audience.

Each *Term Project Summary* will be accompanied by an *Annotated Bibliography* that provides for each source not only a complete citation but also a short paragraph summarizing what information/ideas/concepts this source contributed to your project. See below for exact formatting guidelines.

General Guidelines for Completing the Project:

Drafting and revision process for the written components of this project:

For both the *Project Proposal* and the *Project Summary*, you must perform at least one revision of your written work based on feedback that your receive on earlier drafts. The *Proposal* will be revised based on feedback from your classmates that you will receive during the *Term Project Proposal Workshop* in class (Week 08). The *Summary* will be revised based on feedback from your instructor. You also have the option to receive extra credit for visiting the *Writing & Tutorial Center* (WTC) before handing in your *Draft* to your instructor. Although it is expected that "revised" work will be superior to "draft" work, the term "draft" should not be construed to mean hastily-conceived, incomplete, or poorly-composed. Those students who present the best possible "draft" work will get the most out of the review and revision process.

Visiting the *Writing & Tutorial Center* (*WTC*):

Visiting the *WTC* is not required but is highly recommended; students who bring draft versions of their *Proposal* and/or *Summary* to the *WTC* will receive extra credit. On the *LMS* you will find the **WTC Visit Form**. This form must be submitted to your instructor to establish that you have visited the *WTC* as part of your revision process. The *WTC* is located on the first floor of North Hall; you can't miss its beautiful coral reef tanks. The center is open Monday through Friday for approximately forty-eight hours, so if you plan ahead you will be able to find a time to visit. You can just walk in, but making an appointment assures that you will have a writing tutor waiting for you when you arrive. You can visit the *WTC* website at http://tinyurl.com/nfnvtww and make an appointment by calling 718-636-3459 or sending an email to wtc@pratt.edu. Please be aware that the *WTC* does not provide proofreading services: you should bring a draft that you have already carefully reviewed for basic errors in spelling and grammar.

Works Cited Page (*also known as your "Bibliography"*):

1. Please use the latest MLA format to cite all sources. The only modification to the MLA format that you are asked to make is to single-space your citations.
2. Your *Works Cited Page* must contain at least seven sources, which should be listed alphabetically by the author's last name. Of these sources, at least one must be from the Pratt library. Speak to your instructor if you are not clear on what this means.
3. The source of all material that is not of your own creation must be cited. This includes:
    ★ All print media (examples: articles, books)
    ★ All digital media (examples: websites, downloaded books and articles, podcasts)
    ★ All images (analog or digital) other than those that you have created entirely
4. All sources in your *Works Cited Page* must be referenced in your text. Do not include sources that are not cited at least once.
5. In referencing your citations, use the correct MLA format for in-text citations. Please do not use footnotes, as they are redundant to in-text citations.
6. Please be careful about web citations. Much of what is published on the web is unreliable. It is up to you to assess the validity of all your sources.

Converting your Works Cited Page into your *Annotated Bibliography*:

1. Along with the main *Project Proposal* and *Summary,* also provide an *Annotated Bibliography* (does not count towards page minimum or maximum) that: a) lists each of the sources you used to

inform your project in MLA citation format (see above); and b) provides for each source a list explicitly identifying the "scientific facts" and "scientific ideas" found in that source.

2. Reference all ideas that are not your own using your *Annotated Bibliography*.

Submission of *Term Project* work:

Unless otherwise specified, all submission of work should be done via the *Learning Management System* (*LMS*) in *Adobe PDF* format. Formats other than PDF will not be accepted. Analog creative work (whether it be two- or three-dimensional) must be photodocumented as described above <u>and</u> submitted to your instructor. See the *LMS* page describing *How to Submit Work in this Course* for submission details and specifications.

There is a 10% per day penalty imposed on late submissions of any component of this project. Although you may use some of your "allowance days" (see course syllabus) for *Term Project* components, remember that turning in earlier stages of the project will likely delay later stages, causing late penalties to accumulate. Please be aware that appointments at the *WTC* can be harder to come by as the semester progresses, and that you should expect that it will take several days for your instructor to provide you with feedback on your draft work; the due dates incorporate these inherent delays into the project workflow, but if you procrastinate it's possible that these delays may prevent you from completing a project by the end of the term.

How you will be graded:

Your grade will be primarily based on how well you meet the objectives stated above. In addition, your instructor will assess how well you expressed an understanding of biological concepts. <u>*Your project should clearly demonstrate what you have learned in this class*</u>. All written work is expected to use proper spelling and grammar, except where obvious and necessary creative liberties are being taken with the language. Please see the *LMS* for sample grading sheets that provide you with a precise idea of how you will be graded.

On academic honesty:

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. All cases of suspected plagiarism will be turned over to the Registrar's office for potential referral to the academic judiciary. Please be careful to indicate the source of all ideas other than your own; this includes both direct quotes ("evolution is the science of...") and paraphrasing of books, scientific papers, and websites. Careful citation makes you seem more authoritative in whatever you write. For more information on the course plagiarism policy see the syllabus and this site: http://www.christopherxjjensen.com/teaching/for-students/#no-plagiarism.

Extra credit opportunities:

There are four main opportunities for extra credit on the *Term Project*:

1. Bringing your *Draft Proposal* to the *Writing & Tutorial Center*;
2. Writing a reflection after submitting your *Draft Proposal*;
3. Bringing your *Draft Project Summary* to the *Writing & Tutorial Center*;
4. Writing a reflection after submitting your *Draft Project Summary*.

Other extra credit assignments count towards *Coursework* and cannot be applied to the *Term Project*.