

READING JOURNAL

Introduction

As mentioned on the first day class, the reading *experience* is central to the learning in this course. Although the lectures will provide a narrative of ideas and historical context to organize your thinking about the material, they will not stand in for the more fundamental learning that occurs in the attentive, rigorous reading of the texts. Much of the course design is about positioning and enabling you to grapple with the material yourself. Furthermore, while I think the lectures will provide insight and structure, and I hope they render the ideas engaging, they will not be what you remember or "use" after the class is over. What will influence your thought, structure your imagination, and animate your actions later will be those things that you have worked on and translated in your own understanding. For ideas and knowledge to change you they cannot simply be consumed - they must be engaged, fully imagined, worked on, and understood. Keeping a reading journal for the class is an important aid to this process.

Throughout the quarter you will keep a reading journal that collects your thoughts, key passages, and questions as you engage the course materials and lecture narrative. You will create a Google Document and share it directly with me, and periodically make entries processing your experience of the class and the course readings and media. This journal is a space of exploration, reflection, and insight meant to aid your understanding of the course ideas and track your own intellectual development. These are also a way for me to see what the class is grappling with and use that information to modify and adapt my lecture material to the group.

Details

Here are the steps to creating your journal for the class. Please follow these directions carefully!

1. Log in to Google Docs using your UW Net ID (no need to register a new account).
2. Create a new document and enter the filename "Lastname,Firstname-CHID110 Reading Journal" in place of the default "Untitled document" in the field in the top left.
3. Click the blue "SHARE" button on the top right and type "schenold@uw.edu" in the "People" field to share this document with me (no need to type a note to me).
4. Click the blue "Send" button to complete the share.

As for the content of the journal, almost anything goes, but here are some requirements and guidelines:

1. Entries should be dated, from earliest at top to last at bottom of the document
2. Entries should contain complete thoughts (at least one per entry) but need not essay-grade prose
3. Notes and fragments are ok, but your entry for a session should contain a passage where you try to work through a thought in full detail
4. Direct quotations are great to include: make an effort to comment on them if you bring them up
5. Other things you might do in your entry:
 - ✓ Reference pictures and links to other media that are on your mind or relate to the course ideas in some way.
 - ✓ Record questions about the texts.
 - ✓ Connect the course ideas to pop culture or current events, news items, etc.
 - ✓ Connect the course ideas to aspects of your studies in your major discipline or other classes (past readings, practices, etc).

[more on back]

Evaluation

These journals will be evaluated holistically, and I will be looking for quality of thought - the questions raised, the connection made between the elements of the class, the insights into the ideas in the texts, etc. I will also be looking for consistent engagement - it will do no good to have no entries for a few weeks and then a burst at the end of the quarter.

Do *not* obsess about eloquence or style: the writing should be organic reflection on the course material as you go, and hence it will naturally be a little rough and a little chaotic (as live thinking processes are). I will not be evaluating some kind of revelation in the trajectory of the entries, and though I would love for you to have this experience, aiming for this in your writing is not a good idea. Just focus on processing the material as you go. I will check these periodically, and if something is compelling I will try to make a comment or two, and if you are not producing relevant thinking I will also contact you.