

## **Audrey S. Pettibon, English Composition, CHSS**

### **Building Process Management Skills: Integrating an Interactive Timeline in Your Course**

Quite often, it can be difficult for students, whether they are in face-to-face, online or hybrid courses, to recognize how low-stakes assignments are preparing them for the more complex, high-stakes assignments in our courses. This can hinder their ability to develop effective process management skills, necessary for planning and executing multi-step tasks in a project-based learning model.

Since scaffolding is a regular practice of mine when planning courses throughout my career, in spring of 2021 I introduced a scaffolded “Course Timeline” into my ENGH 302 classes to support my students in learning how to problem-solve and refine their own process management skills. The timelines are designed to show the scaffolded progression of minor assignments and in-class skills practice that leads up to the major class assignments. Each of the weekly assignments as well as the major assignments in the timeline are linked to the corresponding assignment descriptions/portfolios on Canvas.

At any point in the semester, students can refer back to the timeline infographic and easily access/revisit those skills activities they want to review. As students navigate through the timeline, they can explore the variety of resources, group activities and discussions that help build critical reading, analysis and synthesis skills required for the larger summative projects in my courses. More critically, the timeline models for them the process of scaffolding skills to build to a larger assignment, helping them refine their own project management strategies.

In Fall of 2021, I added a similar course timeline to my ENGH 101 class, and they have been included in each of my classes since. I attach the timelines in the same content area as the Syllabus and review them during the first week of the class and see students pulling up the timelines throughout the semester for reference. I have attached an annotated copy of my current ENGH 302B (Advanced Composition for Business Majors) timeline below:

The skills listed on the left of the timeline reflect instructional content, in-class activities (listed in blue) and weekly graded minor assignments (listed in gray). These skills are required in order to successfully build up to/complete the correlating major assignment, listed on the right.

Each of the skills sets correlate to a broader learning outcome in the class – here, “planning an inquiry-based research study” and “analytical research and writing” are the overarching outcomes from the skills students acquire in the lead-up to the Case Study + Literature Review assignment.

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY ENGH 302B**  
 Timeline of major projects throughout the semester

**Building Skills:**

- the rhetorical situation
- thinking like a designer
- Memo: Reading Rhetorically (M2)
- Rhetorical Analysis (M2)
- Reading Check (M2)
- assessing sources
- researching topics in a discipline
- Memo: Research Topics (M3)
- Critical Reading (M3)
- rhetorical context
- synthesis
- summary vs. analysis
- Reading Check (M3)
- effective peer review strategies
- providing feedback to writers
- Discipline Awareness Peer Review (M4)
- revising
- 23 ways to improve your draft
- editing checklist
- planning a research study
- Case Study Topics (M5)
- narrowing your topic
- organizing a team & proposing a scope of research
- writing/evaluating research questions
- Research Questions Blog (M6)
- Developing a scope of Research (M6)
- practicing summary & analysis
- evaluating sources
- refining a thesis and research questions
- Reading Check (M7)
- critical reading and note-taking
- reporting information
- quoting vs. paraphrasing
- APA and MLA practice
- building an Exploratory Research Log
- Research Log Draft (M8)
- Final Org Chart & Research Proposal (M8)
- individual conferences
- Final Exploratory Research Log (M9)
- individual conferences
- writing a case study/literature review
- organizing your data
- Memo: Case Writing (M10)
- Reading Check (M10)
- literature reviews
- logical fallacies
- comparative analysis
- synthesizing concepts
- Memo: Reasoning (M11)
- Identifying Proofs (M11)
- Case Study Peer Review (M12)
- formatting a study
- analyzing audiences
- analyzing digital genres
- assembling a media kit
- Case Study Final Draft (M13)
- Media Kit Project Elevator Pitch (M13)
- Media Kit Workshop
- selecting genre & "local" audience
- identifying stakeholders & change-makers
- meeting genre/audience expectations
- aligning genre, purpose & audience
- Media Kit Peer Review (M14)
- Media Presentation workshop
- Media Kit In-class Presentations (M15)
- Memo: Course Reflection (M15)
- Final Media Kits (M16)

**Discipline Awareness (DARA)**  
 Discipline Awareness (M5) - This assignment will help you become familiar with the methodologies and topics in your field and will allow you to study authors and modes closely and explore how authors connect to each other and engage in intellectual conversations. The assignment will also help you think about a potential research question you might pursue for the Case Study assignment, and it might even provide the first few entries for your Exploratory Annotated Bibliography  
 ~1,200 words

**Exploratory Research Log**  
 Your Exploratory (annotated) Research Log (M9) will include six to eight high quality sources that are appropriate for and relevant to your research question. These sources should paint a complex picture of your topic in terms of varying perspectives, emphases, and conclusions.

**Case Study + Literature Review**  
 You will use your annotated bibliography work (and possibly continued research), to support a Case Study + Literature Review (M12) The Case Study/Literature Review allows you to explore the key characteristics, meanings, and implications of your topic. You will pool your source materials collected in the Exploratory Bibliography assignment and select, analyze and summarize pertinent resources. In the Literature Review portion of your Case Study, you will argue for one of several possibilities.  
 ~2,500 words

**Media Kit**  
 The Media Kit (M16) will help you develop your skills in the arena of public relations. You will generate materials that should effectively deliver the same content/context of your findings from the Case Study, but in terms the general public can understand. Your Media Kit will likely be comprised of multiple genres and modes of composition.

**Writing in multiple modes**

**analytical research & writing**

**planning an inquiry-based research study**

**discipline research & rhetorical analysis**

The major projects listed on the right are broadly described for scope and context (students refer back to the Assignment Portfolios and Weekly Modules for specific requirements and materials)

Here, I have included a few images of some of the digital genres that might appear in students' Media Kits for reference and inspiration.

## Using Digital Course Resources

In our technology-driven age, digital literacy is a critical skill that our graduates will need in order to compete and prosper both in and outside of academia. In the final project for my ENGH 302B (Advanced Composition, Business) course, student groups create a digital Media Kit (website) to accompany the research from their Case Study/Literature Review assignments. This assignment not only helps them understand how research is disseminated in the public sector, but also how they digitally design and present that research. In order to better demonstrate what these Media Kits should ultimately look like, I created a web page to serve as part of the assignment description, illustrating all of the elements required. We review the page together as a class, and my students' final Media Kits are uniformly well-detailed and thoroughly addressed each of the assignment requirements. I have included a screenshot of the face page of that website and the active URL below:



## Resources for the ENGH 302B - Media Kit Presentation



### 19 Media Kit Examples and Templates

For a variety of examples and foundational templates, visit [Docformats](#)



### How to Make a Stand-out Media Kit

This [Adobe](#) site provides an overview of a Press/Media Kit and provides a list of potential inclusions and purposes.



### Media Kit Templates

[Canva](#) provides a number of templates for effective Media Kits/presentation materials

This is a public site and can be accessed at: [ENGH 302 Media Kit Guidelines](#)